World War II Wargames Rules

BOLT ACTION

GERMANY STRIKES!

Early War in Europe

OSPREY PUBLISHING

WARLORD GAMES

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Early War in Europe

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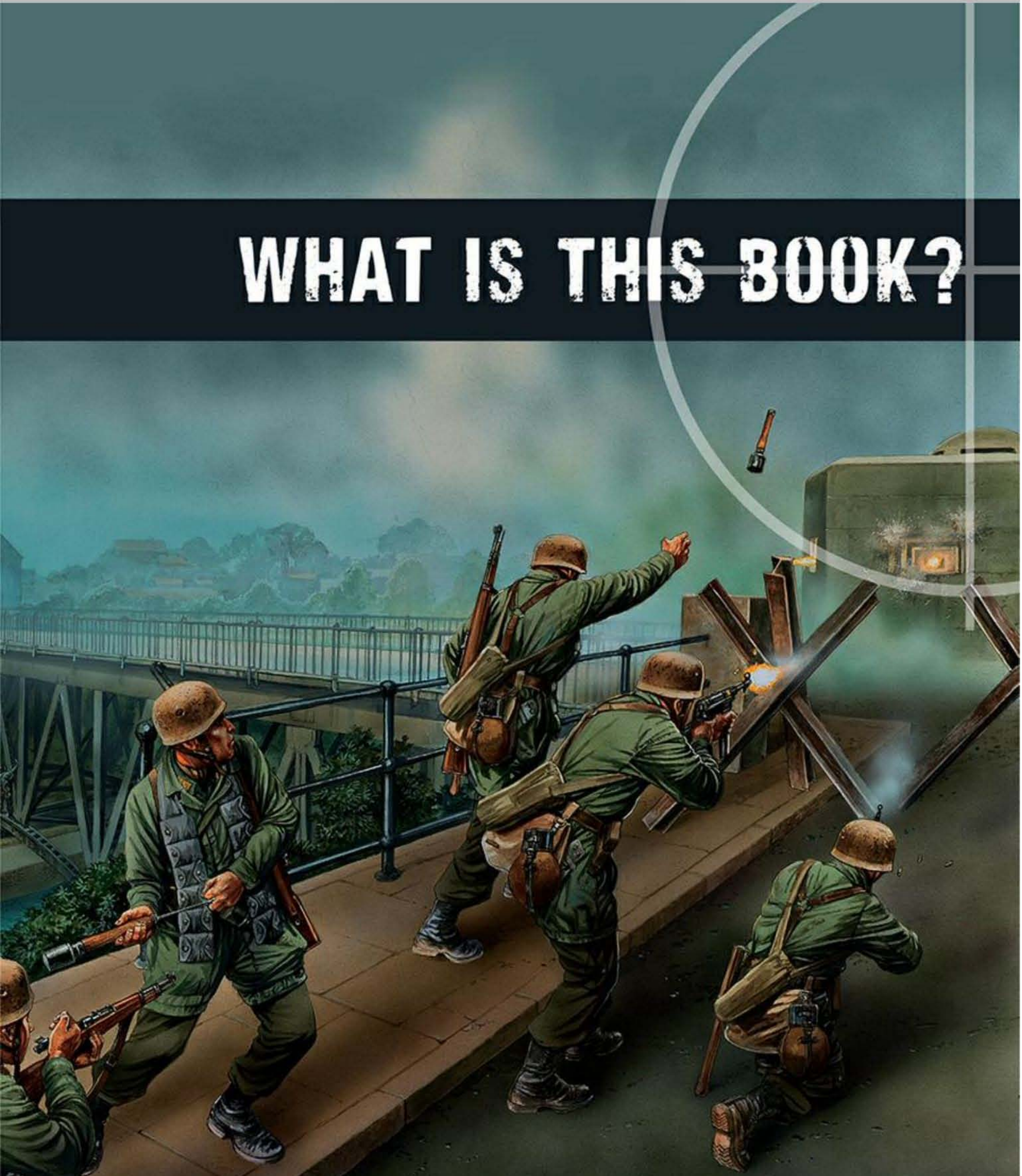
WHAT IS THIS BOOK?



The attack on Veldwezelt Bridge, by Peter Dennis © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Raid 38: *The Fall of Eben Emael.*

EARLY WAR IN EUROPE

This book is a supplement for the *Bolt Action* World War II tabletop wargame. It contains all the background, rules and Theatre Selector information to field armies from the Blitzkrieg era in the Western European Theatre, which for our purposes includes Poland but not Russia, from 1939 to 1940. The Eastern and Mediterranean campaigns will be covered elsewhere.

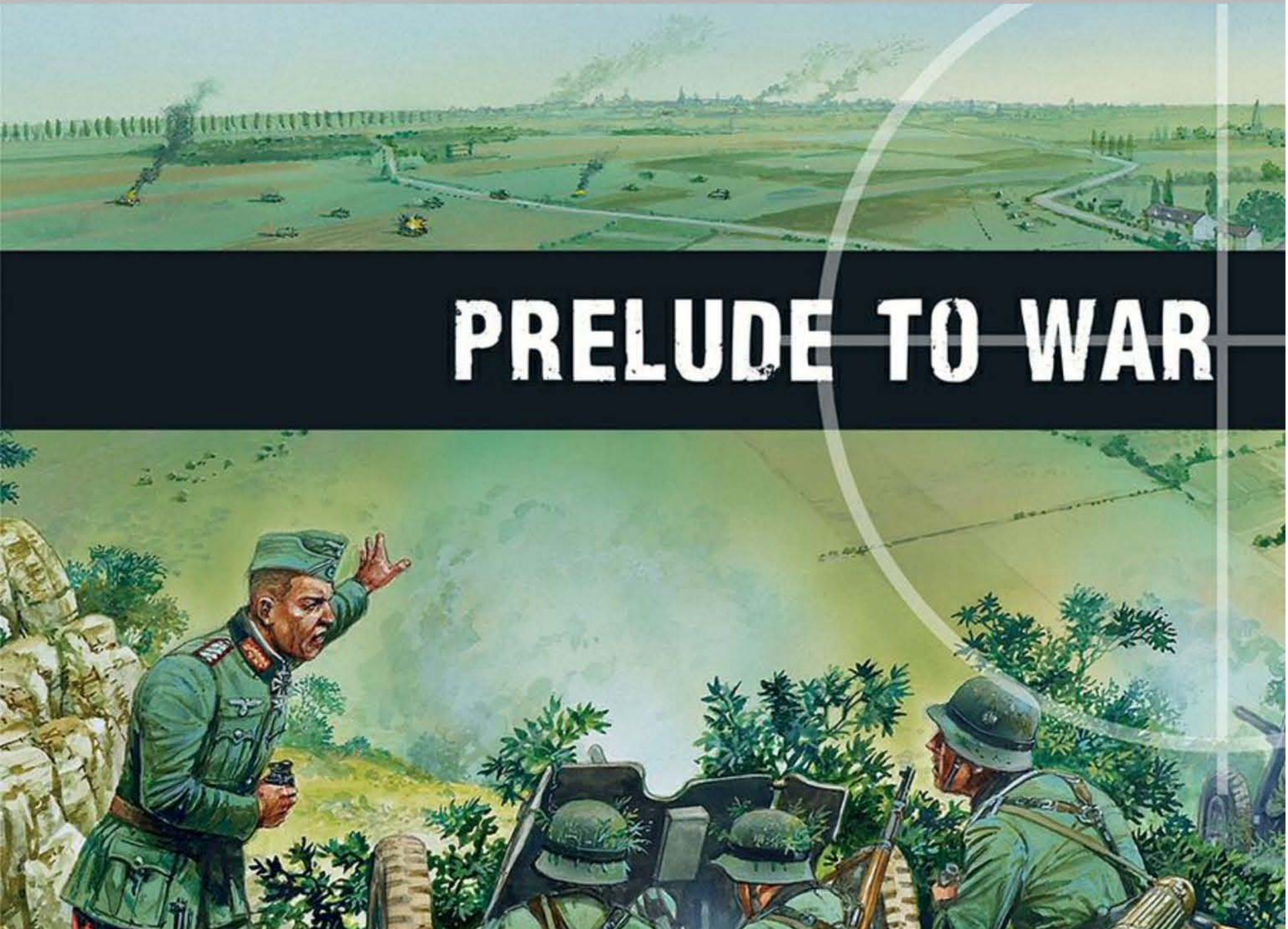
This is not a narrative history. Historical points are only discussed where their interpretation has some direct bearing on the wargame rules or to establish context. You will require the *Bolt Action* rulebook to use this supplement. You will also find the relevant *Bolt Action* national army supplements useful but not absolutely essential since the information within them can be recreated using the selectors in the core rule book as guides. These supplements include *Armies of Great Britain*, *Armies of Germany*, *Armies of France and the Allies*, *Armies of Italy and the Axis* and *Tank War*.

German Strikes! is subdivided into four main sections/campaigns: *Fall Weiss* (Poland), *Weserübung* (Denmark & Norway), *Fall Gelb* (The Low Countries), and *Fall Rot* (France).

This era is one of the most fascinating periods to wargame because new technology dramatically changed the art of war. National armies in the 1930s struggled to develop weapons and doctrines to incorporate rapid technological advance. Different nations had different ideas so these campaigns saw not just a clash of armies but also a clash of concepts. Undoubtedly German doctrine prevailed, so their version of mechanised warfare has given its name to the whole period: Blitzkrieg.

Panzers Marsch! The armoured column heads into enemy territory

PRELUDE TO WAR



The German positions at Arras, by Peter Dennis © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Campaign 264: Fall Gelb *1940 (1)*.

STATIC WARFARE

The late 1930s and opening years of World War II are synonymous with the developing concept of Blitzkrieg and mechanised warfare. The use of specialised machines in combat is as old as organised warfare itself, as attested by the squadrons of chariots used by the great palace civilisations of the Bronze Age.

The art of mass industrial killing reached its apogee in World War I. Soldiers in the combat zone moved at the same speed as Wellington's or Caesar's troops but the killing range and power of missile weaponry had substantially increased. Indeed, one can make a good case that mobility was at its perigee because horses were swept from the battlefield by machine guns and explosive shells.

Breakthroughs had become near impossible because the defender had all the advantages. These not only included the tactical advantage of the lethality of firepower, but also operational advantages as the defender could use railways and wheeled vehicles to concentrate supplies and reinforcements at threatened points. Meanwhile the attacker's ability to exploit any penetration of the line was limited to the speed of men on foot moving through shell holes and barbed wire.

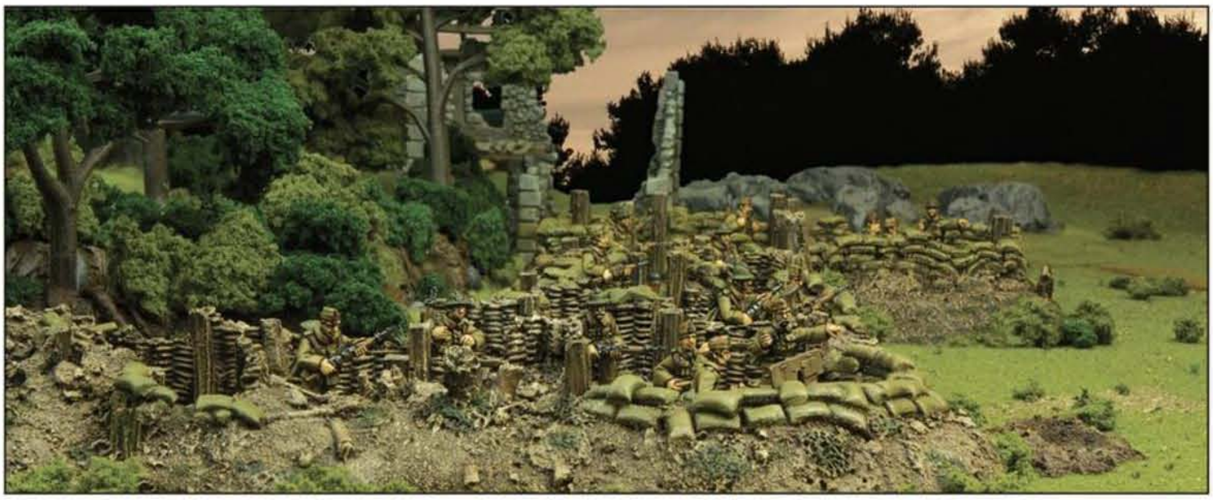
The only support weapons and logistics available to the attacking infantry once they had left the protection of the preprogrammed preliminary bombardment was what they could carry with them. Men staggered forward under the burden of up to 18 kilos (about 40 pounds) of equipment, but it could never be enough to overwhelm defenders sitting on top of stockpiled ammunition and heavy weapons.

Furthermore the defender could maintain a degree of command control by using buried telephone lines. For the attacking troops, however, once they went over the top control was limited to the range an individual could see (and shout). So the defender always had the advantage of a faster OODA Loop: the speed with which an army command can Observe, Orient, Decide and Act.

By the end of World War I the glimmers of a new type of warfare were visible. Tracked all-terrain armoured vehicles supported by aircraft acting as flying artillery and command control by radio offered the possibility of restoring mobility to the battlefield. Military theoreticians and far-sighted soldiers floated new concepts described by a new military terminology: phrases such as decisive battle, indirect approach, deep thrust, defence in depth and finally, Blitzkrieg.

The new warfare depended on novel machines in new organisations, but what form these would take was a matter of fierce debate. To some degree doctrine and technology were intertwined. Doctrine was developed to exploit new technical possibilities, but exactly what was built depended on what armies proposed to achieve... and what their sponsoring taxpayers could afford.

In the early years everyone was still feeling their way. A rich profusion of flawed, inadequate and unreliable machinery saddled the poor benighted soldiery. In the heat of battle, evolution was fast and only the fittest survived to provide the templates for the mechanised divisions that defined warfare over the next century.



Belgians prepare to defend their homeland as dusk falls

THE FIRST MECHANISED WARFARE

The tank was invented in World War I first by the British and then independently by the French to break the deadlock of trench warfare. The concept was a technological solution to moving guns and their crews across the churned up shell and machine-gun raked no-man's-land and through barbed wire to attack enemy trenches. The key technical breakthrough that made the tank possible was the development of the caterpillar track.

Sir Albert Stern always claimed that the true birth of mechanised warfare can be dated to a telegram he received on 22 September 1915 from Sir William Triton, announcing the first successful track link design, something that until then had been problematical: heavy armoured vehicles could not be moved across country except by tracks.

The British army made the first tank attack on 15 September 1916 at Flers-Courcelette during the battle of the Somme. A breakthrough wasn't achieved but about 3,000 metres of ground was gained, which was something of an achievement on the Western Front.

In 1917 tanks were used *en masse* first by the French and then by the British at Cambrai. Basil Liddell Hart and JFC Fuller later touted Cambrai as a great victory for the tank. Fuller even tried to claim credit for the battle plan. It was nonsense. Tanks played merely a supporting role and were mostly out of action after 24 hours. Cambrai was a largely infantry and artillery battle, which used new infiltration and silent gun registration techniques to achieve tactical surprise, but attempts at exploitation failed yet again.

World War I tanks were slow (around four mph), clumsy, lightly armoured boxes that commonly broke down, gassed their crew, and easily stuck in difficult terrain. They were incapable of breakthroughs, not least because they were unsupported by other tracked arms or supply vehicles.

The British Mark IV had a maximum theoretical range of 35 miles and that was your lot when the fuel was all used up. Actually the tank was likely to break down or get stuck long before that.

But tank development was in its infancy and engineers and military men applied themselves to improvements. Jean Baptiste Eugène Estienne, *Père des Chars* ('Father of the tanks'), was instrumental in developing the Renault FT two-man tankette or ultra-light tank. This was the first vehicle to use the tank layout that has become universal: a hull slung between two tracks, engine at the back and the primary weapon in a rotating turret on top.

Estienne took the view that a swarm of cheap light tanks was better than a few heavy vehicles. In 1919 he proposed a plan for a mechanised army of 100,000 men with 4,000 tanks and 8,000 support transport vehicles. This was not really practical, and naturally such heresy was opposed tooth and nail by French military officers who saw tanks solely as infantry support weapons. He did have one disciple, however, a young officer called Charles de Gaulle.

Pz 38(t)

THE BRITISH THEORETICIANS

JFC Fuller produced a paper that was to have a long-term effect of British policy known as Plan 1919. It required fleets of medium combat tanks supported by strike planes operating as artillery to penetrate an enemy line in a surprise attack. Medium tanks would be smaller and faster than the heavy tanks of World War I. These AFVs would cause command chaos by disrupting army and divisional HQs. Step two involved mass attacks by infantry and heavy tanks on a wide front followed by columns of tanks and motorised infantry roaming deep into the enemy's rear. This became known as the 'deep thrust' to which the theoretical answer was defence in depth.

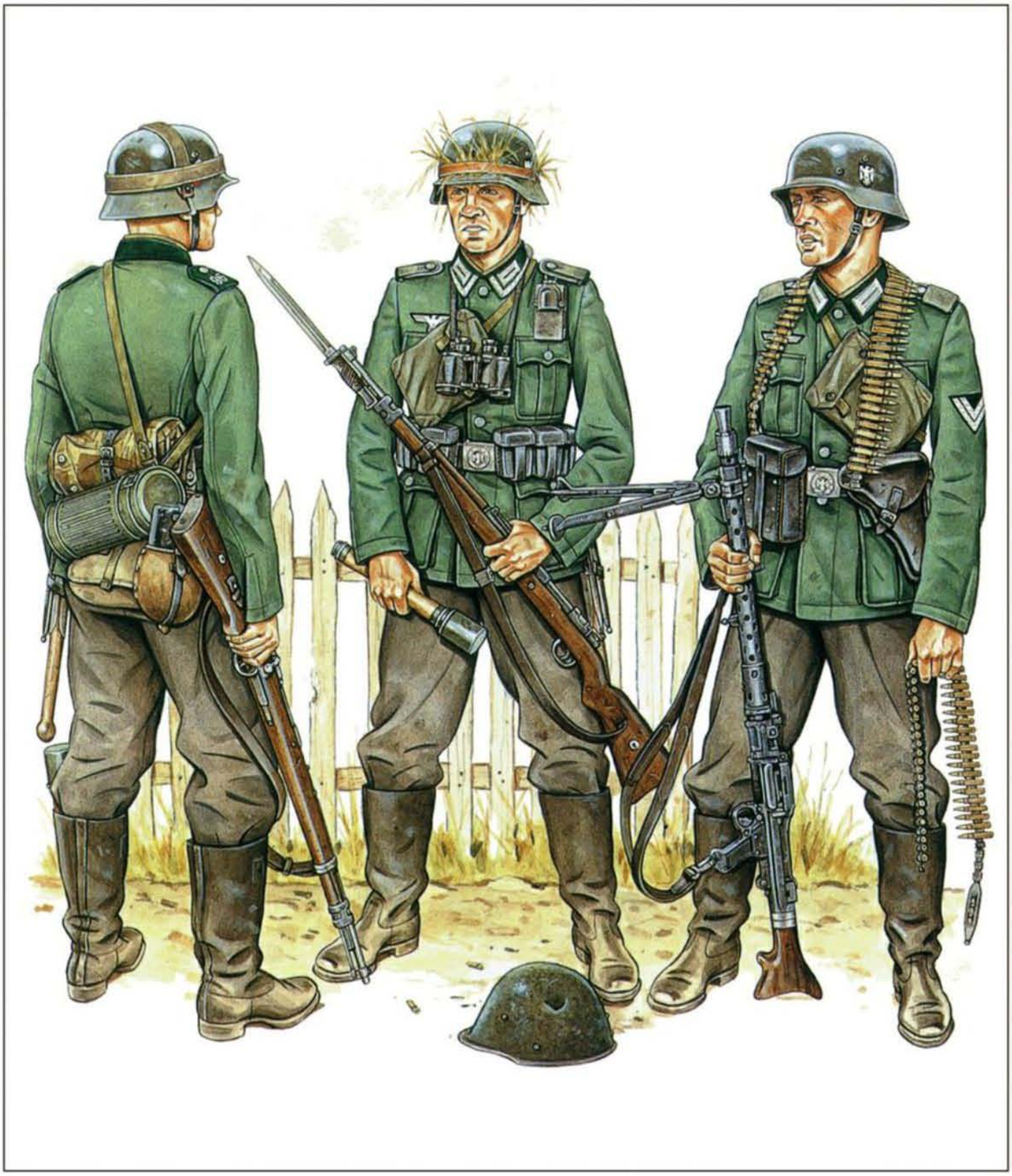
Plan 1919 needed massive forces for the attack and a willingness of the enemy to cooperate by remaining passive. The deep thrust resembled the great cavalry raids carried out in the American Civil War and similar campaigns. However, it was not clear how such deep-thrusting mechanised columns could be supplied: at a pinch you can always graze horses but you cannot graze a tank. As the great mechanised cavalry general George S Patton put it, "My men can eat their belts but my tanks gotta have gas."

The journalist Liddell Hart became an ardent supporter of Plan 1919. He campaigned for large tank fleets operating unsupported. He mixed this with a revolutionary concept of the 'indirect approach' where the tank fleets would avoid the enemy army somehow in order to roam behind the battlefield in a deep thrust. In this model, victory would be achieved by strategic paralysis of the enemy rather than by defeating his army. Liddell Hart published works purporting to show that the indirect approach had been the key to victory ever since someone first hitched a couple of ponies to a chariot. Wars were won by 'decisive battles' and these victories were achieved by the 'indirect approach' to cause 'strategic paralysis' by a 'deep thrust', possibly involving 'vertical envelopment'.

It is entirely understandable that military strategists made desperate efforts to find a way to fight industrial war without returning to the carnage of World War I, but it was an illusion. The indirect approach is strategically nonsensical because the huge citizen armies of industrial powers are quite capable of maintaining continuous defensive belts over many hundreds of miles, so any battle starts with a frontal assault.

Vertical envelopment, which is the massed use of paratroops or glider-borne troops rather than quick airborne commando raids, was almost always a disaster. The Soviet, German, British and American armies all tried such short cuts to victory at various times with similar results. Elite troops were thrown away as light infantry, stranded and out of supply behind enemy lines in disorganised clusters. Their survival usually depended on how quickly they could be rescued by a successful mechanised advance.

And, of course, no one explained all this to the probable enemy: Germany.



Blitzkrieg rifle section, Infanterieregiment 96, Poland, 1939 (L–R): Unteroffizier; Obergefreiter; Schütze, by Stephen Andrew © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Men-at-Arms 311: The German Army 1939–45 (1).

GERMAN CONCEPTS

After World War II the political requirements of the Cold War required the rehabilitation of the Panzer generals, and in return Guderian credited the British and French theoreticians as inspirational. Actually, German theories of mechanised warfare appear to have been entirely homegrown and bore little relationship to British theory. The word ‘Blitzkrieg’ seems to have been invented by *Time* magazine in 1939 when discussing the German conquest of Poland.

The Germans clung to outmoded Clausewitzian ideas that winning wars involved destroying the enemy’s armed forces in combat. One can find many quotes from Clausewitz to this effect, for example: “What do we mean by the defeat of the enemy? Simply the destruction of his forces, whether by death, injury, or any other means – either completely or enough to make him stop fighting… The complete or partial destruction of the enemy must be regarded as the sole object of all engagements… Direct annihilation of the enemy’s forces must always be the dominant consideration.”

This is an important point to remember: The aim of Blitzkrieg was not strategic paralysis but the destruction of the enemy army.

The industrial nations were capable of fielding an army of a million men or even more, and World War I demonstrated that destruction of such a force required an unprecedented scale of slaughter over many years.

Heinz Guderian probably had more influence on the development of the German Panzerwaffe than any other individual; indeed, more than anyone he invented the modern mechanised army. His key insight was in the role of the tank within a combined arms mobile armoured division. It is worth quoting him: “In… 1929, I became convinced that tanks working on their own or in conjunction with infantry could never achieve decisive importance… until the other weapons on whose support they must inevitably rely were brought up to their standard of speed and of cross country performance… what was needed were armoured divisions which would include all the supporting arms needed to allow the tanks to fight with full effect."

Supporting arms included strike aircraft, which were as important to Blitzkrieg as tanks themselves.

The Germans divided their army not into cavalry-armour and infantry-armour like the British and others, but into foot troops and mobile (mechanised) troops. Ideally the whole army would be mobile, but that was far beyond the capacity of the German economy. Indeed, Germany was incapable of supporting a long war, in part because of its lack of access to key strategic materials including such basics for mechanised warfare as oil and iron.

The function of the mobile troops was two-fold: tactical and operational speed, and violent shock action. Their aim was the quick destruction of the enemy army in combat. Mobile forces were limited in range not least because a moving tank column left a trail of broken down vehicles. They also depended on good road and rail communications for logistical supply. Western Europe provided perfect conditions for German ideas of mobility.

The strategic aim of traditional Prussian/German warfare was to destroy enemy armies on Germany's borders with fast violent attacks so as to achieve favourable conditions for an armistice, usually involving a modest redrawing of borders.

However, the German objective in the attack on Poland was significantly different to Clausewitzian warfare. Hitler outlined his war aims thus: "The object of the war is… physically to destroy the enemy. That is why I have prepared, for the moment only in the East, my 'Death's Head' formations with orders to kill without pity or mercy all men, women, and children of Polish descent or language. Only in this way can we obtain the living space we need."The point is that there was a complete mismatch between German military capability – which was designed for a short sharp local border war – and Hitler's war aims: the conquest of huge areas of the Old World and the brutal extermination of the people living there.

A Polish column marches to the front

TANK DESIGN

The next key advance in tank design is demonstrated by the British Vickers Mark E Six Ton light tank of 1928. The Type A variant was basically an improved FT17 with two small one-man turrets each armed with a machine gun. The idea was that the tank could machine gun down a trench in both directions simultaneously, rather like British heavy armour in World War I.

The Type B variant of the Mark E was the game changer. It mounted a 47mm cannon and machine gun in the turret in a duplex mounting (nowadays we call this a coaxial mounting). This was so successful that every successful tank design since has used this arrangement. The larger turret made it possible to incorporate two crew members. This dramatically increased the rate of fire of both weapons, and one-man turrets became obsolete overnight. The French alone among the Great Powers clung to one-man turrets because smaller turrets made heavily armoured tanks cheaper to manufacture. Such penny pinching was to cost the French army dearly in 1940.

The Vickers Mark E was the most successful tank after the FT17. It was built in huge numbers and equipped many armies either in its original design or as variants built under licence (such as the Polish 7TP, Soviet T26 and Imperial Japanese Type 95 Ha-Go). The Mark E fought in a wide variety of interwar conflicts in South America, Europe and Asia and in the Blitzkrieg years of World War II. Just about the only nation not to employ the Vickers in some form was the United Kingdom.

The proposed all-purpose medium tank for Plan 1919 turned out to be too costly to manufacture, so the British switched to cheaper tanks. The first was the infantry support tank, an unloved ugly duckling that turned out to be actually rather useful. But the interest of armour enthusiasts lay in the second design: the cruiser tank. The clue lay in the name. Cruisers were supposed to be the deep thrust vehicles operating independently of infantry or artillery support. They had thin armour similar to an armoured car to make them fast; this was not a problem as they were not intended to do anything so uncouth as actually fight. The British 1929 manual, *Modern Formations*, explained that decisions will be achieved by cruisers “more by generalship than brute force”. This was expecting rather a lot from the average British general of the period.

Both the British and Germans came to the conclusion that a three-man turret was ideal because the commander sat up high and did not need to work the gun. They also realised how difficult it was to see out of a closed down tank, so commanders were provided with top hatches to stick out their heads. The first British tank to have a commander’s cupola was the Medium C in 1919.

In practice, Britain in the 1930s not only couldn’t afford multi-purpose battle tanks but the country couldn’t really afford cruiser tanks or infantry tanks either. So apart from limited short runs of prototypes, the British army deployed small, lightly armoured tanks armed with machine guns. Britain was not the only nation to have to rely on light tanks due to economic reasons: the utility of this armour ‘on the cheap’ was put to the test in the Spanish Civil War.

A Panzer commander scours the horizon for targets

THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

The Spanish Civil War is sometimes described as 'the proving ground' for Blitzkrieg. Actually, as Steven Zaloga points out (in Osprey *New Vanguard* 170), it was no such thing. To start with, very few tanks were available. The Republicans had the largest inventory, but they were pressed to field more than a hundred tanks at any one time. The quality of the tank crews was, at best, mediocre. Apart from the Italian tankettes, tanks were manned by poorly trained Spanish soldiers or foreign volunteers. Spanish officers had little idea of how to use tanks either at a tactical or operational level. Tank units were mostly dissipated in penny packets to support infantry formations. Where a more concentrated armoured attack was attempted, such as the Republican offensive at Fuentes de Ebro on 13 October 1937, the results were woeful due to ineptitude at all levels.

The Communist *Brunete* offensive to relieve Madrid on 6 July 1937 by relatively strong armoured forces (around 100 tanks and 30 armoured cars) is a case in point. The offensive ran straight onto Nationalist positions covered by a high density of field guns and 37mm anti-tank guns. Republican armour was frittered away in small, unimaginative lunges at the guns.

By chance, this battle received extensive press coverage so had a disproportionate influence on armchair military pundits: Liddell Hart declared that cheap anti-tank guns had rendered the tank obsolete. Professional military strategists took the view that it proved nothing except that the Spanish Republicans had no idea about mechanised warfare.

The Spanish Civil War did, however, have a significant influence on tank design. Tank versus tank engagements were extremely rare in World War I but were commonplace in Spain despite the low tank density. The Soviets, almost uniquely among nations, fitted out their light BT and T26 tanks with multi-purpose 45mm cannons capable of engaging either soft or hard targets with high explosive or armour piercing rounds.

Cannon-armed tanks drove light machine gun-armed tankettes from the battlefield. A Soviet tank could penetrate the armour of German or Italian tankettes at ranges of up to a kilometre. Tankette machine guns even with armour piercing ammunition could not penetrate a T26 until they closed to within 150 metres.

Both Germany and the Soviet Union planned to abandon their light tanks for medium battle tanks: the Panzer III and Panzer IV and the superb T34, a paragon of balanced design. The T34 set off a gun–armour race that ended with the steel monsters developed for the Cold War.

KHALKYN GOL

The first mechanised Blitzkrieg victory was not won by Germany but by their erstwhile opponents in the Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union. At the eleventh hour before World War II on 29 August 1939, General Georgy Zhukov annihilated the Japanese 23rd Division at Khalkyn Gol.

Zhukov pinned Japanese forces by an infantry attack to the centre. Then two armoured pincers, comprising three armoured and two mechanised brigades, punched through the Japanese lines and surrounded the luckless 23rd in a classic double envelopment of the sort Hannibal used against the Romans at Cannae. The armour held off desperate Japanese attempts to relieve the trapped forces, while Soviet infantry chopped the 23rd into smaller and smaller segments to be defeated piecemeal.

The Japanese fielded 75,000 men against the Soviet Union's 57,000. But Zhukov committed 500 tanks and 800 combat aircraft against 135 Japanese tanks and 300 aircraft, and he concentrated his armour where it would do most good: at the two *schwerpunkts* (centres of attack or 'spearpoints').

Tracks, armour and the use of aircraft as flying artillery made the battle zone larger than could be achieved by pre-industrial generals. The envelopment zone at Cannae was perhaps four kilometres wide by three kilometres deep but at Khalkyn Gol it was nearer 60 kilometres wide and 20 kilometres deep.

Another difference between Cannae and Khalkyn Gol came from the sheer size and mobility of modern industrial armies. Zhukov had to guard against attacks by relieving forces from outside the immediate battlefield, a problem Hannibal didn't have. To do this, Zhukov employed two sets of pincers: outer pincers consisting of armoured units to fend off Japanese relief forces and inner pincers made up largely of infantry to prevent break outs.

Zhukov's strategic aim was to destroy the offensive power of the Japanese forces at the border so that the Soviet Union could negotiate a favourable peace. In essence, this is the German Blitzkrieg technique. Three years later, Zhukov was to reprise Khalkyn Gol at a city on the Volga: Stalingrad.

THE FAILURE OF GERMAN WAR AIMS

Germany lacked the essential raw materials to fight a world war. The list did not just include exotic metals needed for high technology like jet engines and armour piercing shot, but such basics as steel, oil, population and food.

Oddly enough, the one man who did have a concept of strategy and strategic logistics was Adolf Hitler, but the conclusions he drew and the methods he employed were distorted by his various psychoses. He concluded that Germany could use its undoubted tactical and operational battle superiority to acquire the necessary raw materials to fuel endless war to acquire raw material to… well… you get the picture.

A commonplace aphorism is that wargamers and other armchair warriors fixate on tactics while professional soldiers obsess about logistics. This quote is usually attributed to General Omar Bradley, who knew a thing or two about fighting wars, but it is not a new issue. One reason the Roman army wreaked havoc on barbarian hordes is because Roman commanders had a superb supply chain to support their campaigns so they could concentrate armies and keep them in the field.

For all the success of the German Blitzkrieg, sometimes you just need directions...

In a sense the German military had no overall war aims since its commanders had little concept of strategy. To them, every issue was tactical and operational because this is what they were trained to do. If all you have is a hammer then every problem starts to look like a nail. Winning battles was to the German military an end in itself, not a means to an end. Added to this, German generals were utterly uninterested in the mechanics of logistics. The German military had the mind-set of a barbarian warlord: they plunged on and on in pursuit of glory, conquest and loot as long as they had one litre of fuel left with no thought of the morrow. This is how Guderian ended up in the snow at Moscow without food, fuel, cold-proofed weapons or even warm coats for his men. Rommel ran out of fuel in the Egyptian desert with a supply line running back along a single road to a sea interdicted by the enemy at Malta. Paulus stranded his army in Stalingrad with disastrous consequences.

German strategy, in so far as it had any logic behind it at all, can be seen as an attempt to expand German power by the acquisition of steel, oil, land, food and a captive workforce. And the methods employed were battle and annihilation.

The failure of the German Blitzkrieg illustrates another fallacy that had been heavily pushed by people like Fuller: the myth of the decisive battle. World wars are not won by decisive battles but by the erosion of an enemy's capacity to wage war faster than he can erode your own. Winning battles is nice, of course. It generates accolades for generals and is good for morale. However, operational victories are only useful in so far as they shift the balance of attrition, obtain strategic resources or deny them to the enemy.

Rarely has there been such a stunning series of victories as Hannibal's invasion of Italy, which ended in the 'decisive' battle at Cannae. Except that it was not decisive because, as was the case with Pyrrhus before him, each battle victory eroded the invader's army faster than that of the Romans, because the Romans had immensely greater resources at their disposal (not least in manpower). The great battles of the Eastern Front in World War II from Kiev to Kursk are mere blips when plotted on a graph of the German casualty rate on the Eastern Front. Whether winning or losing the battles, Germany was losing the war.

Each successful campaign weakened the German military enormously; not just by losses of men and equipment in combat but also by the ever-expanding need for garrison troops. For example, the invasion of Denmark and Norway cost the German military around 5,500 killed or missing (and most of their surface fleet, which was to have profound strategic consequences later) but the German occupation forces in Norway were in the hundreds of thousands merely to hold down three million Norwegians. 400,000 were still there at the end of the war.

In the east, Germany's only chance to defeat the Soviet Union was to conscript and arm the non-Russian peoples and turn them against their former masters. Hitler's policy of extermination and the sheer uncompromising brutality of the Nazi leadership precluded that option.

Another aphorism is that a militaristic state with a good army but poor strategy and inferior resources can only hold off the inevitable for so long by winning battles. With each battle an inexperienced enemy learns the necessary military skills and the militaristic state's veterans suffer attrition. The American Civil War is a case in point.

The great victories of the Blitzkrieg era simply made German collapse inevitable.

Blitzkrieg! Can nothing stop the inexorable march of Hitler's Panzer Divisions?

FALL WEISS, POLAND

Street fighting in Warsaw, by Howard Gerrard © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Campaign 107: *Poland 1939.*

INTRODUCTION

The first German mechanised Blitzkrieg was the attack on Poland on 1 September 1939. Hitler gave orders for the invasion of Poland as early as 25 March, just ten days after the occupation of the rump of Czechoslovakia. Britain and France had guaranteed Polish independence, so on 3 September they declared war on Germany. This date, or sometimes 1 September, is traditionally stated as the start of World War II.

The Germans employed 559 infantry battalions against 376 Polish, a force ratio of around 3:2. The ratio was probably closer to 5:2 along the axes of attack, but even so the German advantage in numbers of men was far from overwhelming and certainly less than 3:1, which is the theoretical minimum for an offensive. However, the Wehrmacht could field 2,500 tanks to the Poles' 600, a force ratio greater than 4:1.

The German battle plan was a classic Zhukov double envelopment using two pairs of pincers. The outer pincers met at Warsaw, giving a battlefield of around 350 kilometres wide with a penetration depth of about 250 kilometres. This was a big jump on the size of the combat zone at Khalkyn Gol. A number of factors allowed this increase: the armies were larger; German vehicles were more reliable; logistics were easier on Europe's road networks; the Germans used radio communications enabling them to control forces over much larger distances; and the Luftwaffe had air superiority (an advantage not enjoyed by the Russians at Khalkyn Gol).

Polish dispositions played into German battle plans. The Poles were a cavalry nation so they intended to fight a war of manoeuvre in the long run, but their immediate aim was to concentrate forces on their western border to hold up the German armies long enough to allow Polish mobilisation. The Polish command completely underestimated the violence and speed with which mechanised and mobile units could punch through defences and encircle armies that were operating to a World War I tempo. The Poles were not the first to make this mistake and they wouldn't be the last.

Polish Army marksman team

In terms of the tactics of mechanised warfare, the lessons of the Spanish Civil War were reiterated. Lightly armed and armoured tankettes such as the Panzer I proved to be of limited value even though both armies fielded large numbers. Light cannon-armed tanks such as the Panzer II were better but the future lay with medium tanks such as the Panzer III and Panzer IV.

Polish 7tp

One new lesson emerged, which was that tanks were at a severe disadvantage in urban combat. The siege of Warsaw lasted 12 days. The first tentative attempts by the 4th Panzer Division on 8 September to enter the Warsaw suburbs at Ochota were rebuffed by 75mm field guns and 37mm anti-tank guns. Eventually 13 divisions supported by 1,000 artillery pieces and 1,200 aircraft were required to force the city to surrender.

The massive expenditure of munitions in the campaign also came as a shock to the German military. For example, the Luftwaffe used half its store of bombs in five weeks of fighting in Poland. This demonstrated a severe limitation of German military capabilities that was to be ruthlessly exposed in the coming years. Everything was in the shop window. German armed forces, especially technical branches such as the Luftwaffe, Kriegsmarine or Panzerwaffe, were simply unable to sustain a long war.

The most interesting battles from a wargamer's point of view occurred at the Polish border during the initial German onslaught. Below are described four border-battle scenarios along with relevant new weapons, rules and selectors.

The first scenario is the attack on the Polish Post Office in the Free City of Danzig, which may have been the first exchange of gunfire in World War II. The second is taken from the attack by 4th Panzer Division on the village of Mokra; 4th Panzer was a component of Army Group South, which attacked out of Silesia in a northern-curving pincer that ended at Warsaw. The third is in the north at the Tuchola Forest and features one of the few cavalry charges of World War II. The final scenario recreates one of a series of running clashes between the famous Polish 10th Mechanised Cavalry (the Black Brigade) and the German 4th Light Mechanised Cavalry in the retreat to *Lwów*.

TIMELINE

1939

25 March: Hitler orders the invasion of Poland

1 September: War begins with the German battleship *Schleswig-Holstein* opens fire on Polish positions near Danzig

3 September: Britain and France declare war on Germany

5 September: German Army Group South captures Piotrkow

7 September: German Army Group South reaches the outskirts of Warsaw

9 September: Polish Army Poznan counter-offensive on the Bzura River

15 September: German Army Group North reaches outskirts of Warsaw

16 September: Polish Army Poznan thrown back to Warsaw

17 September: Germany's ally Stalin invades eastern Poland

19 September: Polish Army Krakow attempts to break out to Romania

22 September: Germans capture *Lwów*

25 September: Luftwaffe terror raids on Warsaw cause heavy civilian casualties

27 September: Warsaw falls

6 October: Last Polish units in the field surrender at Kock

SCENARIO 1: THE FIRST SHOTS

The Polish Post Office in the Free City of Danzig was a substantial building that had a similar political status to an embassy. In April 1939, Second Lieutenant Konrad Guderski was sent to fortify the building and train the postal staff as a militia. In August, ten reserve NCOs in the Polish army joined him. This brought the 'garrison' up to 54, plus three civilians (the family of the caretaker). Their weapons included three Browning light machine guns, various firearms and three boxes of grenades.

The Post Office was attacked on 1 September 1939 in what was arguably the first firefight of World War II. The attackers consisted of units of the SS-Heimwehr Danzig, local SA formations, and Ordnungspolizei supported by three armoured cars and light artillery.

The defenders were supposed to hold out for six hours until a relief force arrived. In the event the relief force was lost in the general invasion of Poland and the defenders held for 14 hours until finally blasted out with explosives and a flamethrower. This small but significant encounter demonstrated two truisms that were to be repeated in the coming days: the first was that the Poles were going to fight like tigers even when completely outclassed by superior weapons and numbers; the second was that it was very difficult to clear determined infantry from intact buildings.

The Germans lost ten killed, 25 wounded and an armoured car. All the defenders were killed apart from four who escaped.

FORCES

The scenario is designed to be played with small armies. A Polish force of around 500pts is adequate. The German army should be double the points available to the Polish player. For example, if the Polish play has a 500pt army then the German player may have a 1000pt army.

SET-UP

The Poles are the defenders and set up all their forces anywhere in the Post Office: a large building that is placed in the centre of the table (see below). The playing area should be 4'x4' or as near as possible.

The Germans are the attackers. The German player must divide his army into three waves:

The first wave must consist only of (i) officer and infantry sections (not sappers), (ii) MMG team, (iii) a single light howitzer and (iv) a single armoured car. It may set up on the table anywhere more than 12" from the Post Office.

The second wave may include the same choices as the first wave plus: (i) sappers and (ii) a medium howitzer. It is kept in reserve and may enter the table from Turn 3 from any table edge.

The third wave may include identical choices to the first wave plus sappers. It is kept in reserve and may enter the table from Turn 4 from any table edge.

Note that however the German player cannot exceed the limits in the army selector howsoever he chooses to allocate units to his three waves. For example he may only have a maximum of two light howitzers in his army.

SPECIAL RULES

POLISH POST OFFICE

The Post Office is a substantial fortified building in the centre of the table. The player is advised to refresh his memory about buildings by consulting the chapter starting at page 100 in the *Bolt Action* rulebook. In particular note the large building rules on page 101.

The ground floor of the Post Office consists of six 'small buildings': rooms, tacked together in two rows of three. A first floor consists of six more rooms on top. All the rooms have windows to the outside, one per exterior wall. Ground floor windows and doors are barred so the only room that can be assaulted from the outside is the centre front room where there is a main entrance. Alternatively sappers may be used to blow a hole into a ground floor room, allowing an assault from the outside (see rules below).

Once inside the Post Office, infantry may assault from one room to another horizontally or vertically.

The ground around the Post Office should be clear for at least 12” in all directions. The rest of the area on the table is built up with buildings, streets, trees, walls and so on.

EXPLOSIVE CHARGES

Explosive charges are carried by the Sapper team. To use an explosive charge the team must use an Advance order to move adjacent to the target such as a wall. Place a marker or suitable model to represent the charge. The following turn the team must use another Advance or Run order to move at least three inches from the charge. The player then immediately tests with a D6 die roll to see whether the charge is effective using the table below.

Roll	Result
1	Charge fails to detonate
2–5	Charge blows a hole in the wall: treat this as a new door and mark the wall with an appropriate counter

6	Charge blows a hole in the wall and any occupants of the room suffer HE D3 hits

OBJECTIVES

Each room of the Post Office is an Objective.

GAME DURATION

Keep a count of the game turns as they elapse. At the end of Turn 5 roll a D6. Play another turn on a 3+. Roll another D6 at the end of Turn 6 should you reach it. Play another turn on a 5+.

VICTORY!

At the end of the game the players receive one victory point for every room occupied by their troops and clear of enemy troops. The player with the most victory points has won. A draw is declared if both players have the same number of points.

PLAYER NOTES

Type “Danzig Post Office 1939” or “*Obrona Poczty Gdańskiej* 1939” into the YouTube search engine and you will find a short monochrome film clip of the battle that will give ideas for terrain building.

It will probably be convenient to have the upper floor set up off-table as the battle proceeds.

The German player has it all to do in this scenario so there is no point in being defensive. Your troops may be a bit dodgy but you have plenty of replacements, so attack! The Polish player has to hang on for reinforcements to arrive. They won’t do so, of course, but if you can still control a wing by the end of the game you are in with a chance of a draw or even a win.

Wargamers may baulk at modelling the inside of the building. A halfway house is to divide up the rooms with card walls. Otherwise, leave the room interiors empty and treat anything inside as being in soft cover from fire originating from within the room. You can also shoot into adjacent rooms, vertically or horizontally, but treat the defender as being in a building and the firer as outside the building.

Polish defenders prepare to face the invading German forces

SCENARIO 2: ARMOURED TRAIN

The village of Mokra was the scene of intense fighting on the first day of World War II between the Wolynyska Cavalry Brigade, supported by the armoured train *Smialy*, and the 4th Panzer Division. The Panzer Division badly coordinated the attack of its component arms and was repulsed with significant losses. The division lost about 160 vehicles, of which about half were tanks.

4th Panzer went on to receive another blooding by the defenders of Warsaw, including losing several tanks set alight by streets of burning turpentine.

Panzer divisions in 1939 were still too tank-heavy, although better balanced than other countries' armoured divisions. This was especially true of 4th Panzer, which was not at full complement in infantry or anti-tank weapons. The 4th Panzer selector reflects these limitations.

The Polish cavalry suffered horrendous casualties and was obliged to retreat that evening. The battle confirmed the high morale and fighting spirit of Polish cavalry units, but also demonstrated that they were woefully equipped to handle a Panzer division.

German Heer light mortar team

FORCES

The Polish force must include one Armoured Train Platoon (see here).

The rest of the force is drawn from the Polish Cavalry Reinforced Platoon (see here).

The German force is drawn from the 4th Panzer Division selector (see here).

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 2: Maximum Attrition' as described in the *Bolt Action* rulebook with the following modifications:

- The Polish player is always the defender.
- A railway line should be laid transversely across the table in the defender's set-up zone, from one short table edge to the other. Of course, if the train is left in reserve, it can only enter on the railway line and cannot outflank. When a train arrives from reserve, it will always enter the table completely in a single Run move, this represents the train arriving at high speed and then slowing down abruptly with an emergency brake.

PLAYER NOTES

Armoured trains are large and will tend to dominate a 28mm battlefield unless the playing area is equally expansive. At the time of writing, I am unaware of any commercial manufacturer producing suitable models in a scale suitable for 28mm games. Commercially available O gauge railway tracks are available from a number of model railway companies but tend to be pricey.

There are two potential solutions. The first is to use the smaller 1/72 scale plastic models available from kit manufacturers. These are relatively inexpensive and suitable OO gauge track is cheap. Many gamers already use 1/72 scale aircraft in their 28mm games for much the same reasons.

The perfectionist may prefer to make his own models in 1/56 scale. For those up for a challenge, train wheels in O gauge can be obtained from model railway shops and turrets from 28mm tank manufacturers.

SCENARIO 3: CAVALRY CHARGE

"The Polish Pomorska Cavalry Brigade, in ignorance of the nature of our tanks, had charged them with swords and lances and had suffered tremendous losses." – Guderian, *Panzer Leader*

The story of Polish cavalry gallantly charging steel tanks with lances is one of the most enduring myths of military history. The idea promulgated by Guderian that the Poles failed to grasp that a tank had armour that was impervious to a lance point is a ludicrous suggestion. By 1939 cavalry lances were merely parade ground equipment in the same way as British Guards regiments wore bearskin helmets and red jackets.

The moral of this is to beware of generals' memoirs. Any commander's recollections are liable to be self-serving to some degree, but German and Soviet accounts in particular are riddled with propaganda. This particular tale was invented to ridicule the Poles by suggesting they were medieval.

The real battle on which the myth is based took place in a clearing in the Tuchola Forest on the first day of World War II or soon afterwards. Two squadrons (perhaps 250 men) from the 18th Pomeranian Uhlans screening retreating Polish units surprised and charged a detachment of the German 76th Infantry Regiment attached to the 20th Motorised Division. The charge successfully dispersed the German infantry, but the Polish cavalry was in turn surprised by armoured cars from the 20th Division's reconnaissance battalion and suffered heavy casualties (around 60 men) from machine gun and auto cannon fire.

FORCES

POMERANIAN UHLANS

The Pomeranian Uhlans that make up the Polish OOB (Order Of Battle) for the battle of the Tuchola Forest should be drawn entirely from headquarters and cavalry/infantry sections (including transport and tows) of the Polish Cavalry Squadron selector (see here). No Polish artillery or armoured vehicles were engaged so should not be included in this scenario for strict historical accuracy.

20TH MOTORISED DETACHMENT

The German 20th Infantry Division was formed in 1934 in Hamburg and motorised between 1938 and 1939. It was attached to Guderian's XIX Corps for the invasion of Poland, attacking out of West Prussia into the Polish corridor to the Baltic, and from there in a pincer to Brest-Litovsk.

The 20th Motorised Detachment is split into two forces: infantry and armoured cars. The OOB for the infantry force may be drawn only from the headquarters and infantry choices from the '1939 – The September Campaign' on page 70 of the *Armies of Germany* supplement. The German infantry force should use up between half and three quarters of the German points available.

Similarly, the armoured car force may be drawn from the above lists, but consists only of armoured cars (one of which can be given the Command Vehicle rule for +25pts). The German player is not limited to one vehicle in this scenario. He may take as many armoured cars as he allocates points for. The 20th Infantry were actually short of armoured cars in 1939, possessing only a single detachment from its reconnaissance battalion equipped with SdKfz 231 (6-Rad) heavy armoured cars, so if possible this model should be used in the scenario.

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 4: Hold Until Relieved' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook, with the following modifications:

- The Poles are the attackers.

- The Germans are the defenders. The German 'on table units' and normal reserve units are drawn from the German infantry force. The German armoured car force units are a special Reserve. They may be ordered onto the table on Turn Four if the player rolls a 4+. Otherwise, they may be ordered onto the table from Turn Five.

PLAYER NOTES

This is a tricky scenario for both players when considering what units to choose for their armies, particularly because of the uncertainty over game length and the entry of the German armoured cars. The Polish player has to decide whether to use small weak platoons to maximise the number of anti-tank rifles or to tailor an army for a quick kill on the German infantry and hope to hold on with suicidal close combat attacks on the German armour when it arrives.

The German player has a powerful asset in his armoured cars and will be tempted to maximise their number but suppose they are delayed a turn and the game finishes early?

SCENARIO 4: THE BLACK BRIGADE

The 14th Army was the most southerly of the three armies in Army Group South and was tasked with attacking due east across lower Poland towards *Lwów*.

This scenario addresses the period after the initial clash. The Polish 10th Motorised Cavalry Brigade, called the Black Brigade, held the Germans to a slow advance of around ten kilometres per day. On the fifth day the Polish front to the north of the brigade collapsed and the 10th was pulled out of the line to act as a strategic reserve. It then fought as a screening force, delaying the Germans at river crossings so the slower moving Polish infantry could retreat into *Lwów*.

The Black Brigade took on the 2nd Panzer Division, the 4th Light Motorised Cavalry Division (later 9th Panzer) and the 3rd Mountain Division simultaneously. The Black Brigade was an elite unit as was demonstrated five years later at the Falaise Gap.

FORCES

4TH LIGHT DIVISION

In common with other European armies, there was a great deal of friction in the interwar years in the German military between the traditional horse-mounted cavalry and the new mechanised units. For example, in the British army the Royal Tank Regiment persisted in referring to mechanised cavalry regiments as ‘donkey wallopers’. Germany followed a somewhat different route to the British, who mechanised their cavalry and turned them into armoured reconnaissance units. German cavalry elected to remain as independent mechanised heavy cavalry divisions, known confusingly as Light Divisions. These usually had two motorised dragoon regiments (i.e. motorised infantry) and a Panzer battalion. Light divisions proved a failure in the invasion of Poland and were upgraded to Panzer divisions shortly afterwards.

The 4th Light Division was formed in Vienna in 1938, and was converted into 9th Panzer in early January in time for *Fall Gelb*. In 1939 it had an understrength Panzer battalion of 34 Panzer I, 23 Panzer II and 5 PzBef. Use the '1939 – The September Campaign' selector on page 70 of the *Armies of Germany* supplement to create the army. Note, however, that Panzer III and Panzer IV tanks are not available and that all transport vehicles should be soft-skinned.

BLACK BRIGADE SQUADRON

The Polish force, meanwhile, is made up of the Black Brigade Squadron (see the appropriate *Fall Weiss* selector here)

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 4: Hold Until Relieved' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook, with the following modifications:

- The Germans are the attackers.
- The Poles are the defenders.
- Set up a river (impassable terrain) traversing the centre of the table. Place a bridge (the objective) as per the scenario instructions in the *Bolt Action* rulebook.

PLAYER NOTES

This is a classic assault to capture a key terrain objective: a bridge over an impassable river. A river does not have to be the Volga to present a major obstacle to an attacker who is dependent on wheeled vehicles for supply. Some vicious battles in Normandy occurred around what were little more than agricultural ramps over ditches.

The whole game hinges on control of the bridge. Players should not lose sight of the fact that killing enemy units is merely a tool to achieve this purpose.

A great deal depends on whether the defender’s on-table force can keep control of the objective until reinforcements arrive. The first few turns can be critical in deciding the final outcome.

Polish twin-turret 7tp

ADDITIONAL UNITS

POLISH UNITS

POLISH POST OFFICE GARRISON MILITIA SECTION

These represent units of postal workers led by a veteran NCO. The mix is considered to be Regular for the purposes of the game.

Cost: 30pts (Regular)

Composition: 1 NCO and 2 men

Weapons: Rifles

Options:

- Add up to 2 additional men at +10pts each
- Any man may have a submachine gun for +3pts

POLISH POST OFFICE GARRISON LMG SECTION

Cost: 40pts (Regular)

Composition: 1 NCO and 1 man

Weapons: LMG and pistols

POLISH POST OFFICE GARRISON GRENADE SECTION

Cost: 40pts (Regular)

Composition: 1 NCO and 1 man

Weapons: Rifles and 1 VB launcher

Special Rules:

- VB Launcher: This is an attachment to a rifle that fires grenades, turning the weapon into a light mortar. It can operate each turn either as a rifle or a VB launcher. See page 11 of *Armies of France and the Allies.*

SAMOCHÓD PANCERNY WZ.29 URSUS HEAVY ARMOURED CAR

Designed in 1929, the Samochd Pancerny wz.29 was more commonly known as Ursus or CWS. Based on the chassis of a 2-ton truck, the Ursus mounted a 37mm anti-tank gun and multiple machine guns. Although adequately armoured for the inter-war period, the Ursus was the poor relation when facing more modern opposition in 1939. From the beginning of the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, the Polish 11th Armoured Battalion, containing the Ursus, was in action performing valuable reconnaissance and patrolling duties. The Ursus performed well in action, largely due to its 37mm gun, but its relatively slow speed and lack of all-wheel drive compromised its effectiveness. No wz.29 armoured cars survived the war.

Cost: 72pts (Inexperienced), 90pts (Regular), 108pts (Veteran)

Weapons: one turret-mounted low-velocity light anti-tank gun, one turret-mounted rear facing MMG, and one hull-mounted rear facing MMG

Damage Value: 7+ (armoured car)

Special Rules:

- Low velocity light anti-tank gun. The Puteaux SA18 counts as a light anti-tank gun but with an armour penetration rating of +3 instead of the usual +4.
- Recce
- Too many jobs! Combining the roles of commander, gunner for two different weapons and loader together means it's hard to do different things at once. To represent this it is always necessary to make an order test when issuing an Advance order, even if the vehicle is not pinned. In addition, the vehicle may fire either the main gun or the turret-mounted MMG in the same turn, not both.

Selectors:

- The Ursus is an armoured car for the purposes of the generic Reinforced Platoon selector from the *Bolt Action* rulebook and for the battle of Poland selector.

PZINŻ 222 HALF-TRACK TRUCK

The PZInz 222 was an experimental Polish unarmoured, open, half-track truck used to carry 'motorised cavalry'. Only limited numbers were constructed. An artillery tractor version was in development as World War II started, but it is unclear if any were actually produced.

Cost: 35pts (Inexperienced), 44pts (Regular), 53pts (Veteran)
Weapons: None
Damage Value: 6+ (soft-skin)
Transport: 12 men
Tow: Any light or medium gun
Options:
- Add pintle-mounted MMG covering the rear arc for +15pts

POLSKI-FIAT 508III W LAZIK JEEP

A Fiat car made under licence by PZInz and adapted for military use.

Cost: 30pts (Regular), 36pts (Veteran)
Weapons: none
Damage Value: 6+ (soft-skin)
Transport: 3 men
Options:
- May have pintle-mounted MMG for +10pts (but loses transport capability)

Special Rules:
- Recce

GERMAN UNITS

SS-HEIMWEHR DANZIG SECTION

The SS-Heimwehr were locally recruited SS militia. They were little more than thugs with limited military experience.

Cost: Inexperienced Infantry 40pts
Composition: 1 NCO and 4 men
Weapons: Rifles
Options:
- Add up to 2 additional men with rifles at +8pts each
- The NCO may have a submachine gun for +3pts
- Up to 1 man can have a light machine gun for +20pts and another man becomes the loader

Special Rules:
- Party Indoctrination: Heimwehr units are Green and must test when they first suffer a casualty (see page 70 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook). If Heimwehr sections are upgraded to Regular as a result of this test then roll again. They convert to fanatics on a 6.

STURMABTEILUNG SECTION

The Sturmabteilung or SA were street-fighting thugs with minimal military training.

Cost: Inexperienced Infantry 20pts
Composition: 1 NCO and 4 men
Weapons: Rifles
Options:
- Add up to 2 additional men with rifles at +4pts each
- The NCO may have a submachine gun for +3pts

Special Rules:
- Shirkers, as described on page 70 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook. SA recruits joined for the boozing and beating up hapless victims, not fighting

armed men!

ORDNUNGSPOLIZEI SECTION

The German police had paramilitary battalions that were intended for anti-partisan duties and dealing with unarmed civilians rather than military combat.

Cost: Inexperienced Infantry 20pts
Composition: 1 NCO and 4 men
Weapons: Rifles
Options:
- Add up to 2 additional men with rifles at +4pts each
- Any figure may have a submachine gun for +3pts

SAPPER TEAM

A small unit of combat engineers equipped with a flamethrower and high explosive charges.

Cost: 84pts (Veteran)
Team: 3 men
Weapons: 2 men with rifles, 1 man with infantry flamethrower (another man acts as the assistant), all men have anti-tank grenades
Options:
- Add up to 2 additional men with rifles and anti-tank grenades at +15pts each
- Replace any rifle with a submachine gun for +3pts each

Special Rules:
- Tank-hunters

STEYR ADGZ M35 HEAVY ARMOURED CAR

27 Steyr heavy armoured cars were built from 1935 to 1937 for the Austrian Army. They were inherited by the Germans after the *Anschluss* and were used for police and anti-partisan operations in the east. The Waffen SS ordered a further 25 in 1942. The SS-Heimwehr Danzig used three of these cars in their attack on the Polish Post Office. The Steyr was unusual in that it was longitudinally symmetrical, having no rear, and could be driven from either end. It was armed with two medium machine guns in the hull, one at each end, and either a medium machine gun or a light automatic 20mm cannon in the turret. Supposedly some SS vehicles were retro-fitted with Soviet T-26 tank turrets but this is uncertain.

Cost: 76pts (Inexperienced), 95pts (Regular), 114pts (Veteran)
Weapons: 2 hull-mounted MMGs (front and back), 1 turret-mounted MMG
Damage Value: 7+ (armoured car)
Options:
- Replace the turret-mounted MMG with a Light Automatic Cannon for +20pts

Special Rules:
- Recce (dual direction steering)

PANZERBEFEHLSWAGEN SDKFZ 267-268 PZ III AUS D1

This was a radio version of the Panzer III with a large frame antenna on the rear hull and a dummy cannon so it did not stand out as a command vehicle.

Cost: 76pts (Inexperienced), 95pts (Regular)
Weapons: None
Damage Value: 8+ (light tank)
Options:

- May fit a front hull-mounted MMG for +10pts

Special Rules:

- Command Vehicle

THEATRE SELECTORS

POLISH POST OFFICE GARRISON

The units available to this Reinforced Platoon can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Weiss*, starting here.

POLISH POST OFFICE GARRISON REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Second Lieutenant Konrad Guderski
2 Militia sections

plus:

Infantry
0–4 Militia sections
0–2 LMG sections
0–2 Grenade sections

SPECIAL RULES

- Elite Officer Class: All Polish HQ units are fanatics, as described on page 70 of the Bolt Action rulebook.
- Nowhere To Run: Polish garrison units that fail a morale check that would cause them to be destroyed may take the test again and apply the second result. In addition, they are not destroyed when they have as many pin markers as their original morale values because they have nowhere to run.

LEGENDS OF POLAND

KONRAD GUDERSKI

Guderski was a Polish reserve combat engineer. His duties were to both train the staff of the Post Office in military skills and to fortify the building. This involved preparing clear lanes of fire by removing trees and so forth as well as strengthening the building itself. He prevented German troops in the second assault from exploiting a breach in the walls by detonating a hand grenade that unfortunately also dealt him a mortal wound.

Cost: 95pts (Veteran)
Team: 1 officer and up to 2 men
Weapons: Pistol, rifle or submachine gun, as depicted on the model
Options:

- The officer may be accompanied by up to 2 men at a cost of 13pts per man (Veteran NCOs)

Special Rules:

- Determined: Guderski's Morale bonus is +2.
- They Shall Not Pass: Guderski may set off a grenade instead of firing a weapon as part of a Fire or Advance order: this causes every model within a radius of 3" of Guderski (including himself) to take a hit with a +1 Pen value.

POLISH ARMOURED TRAIN PLATOON

For the purposes of the game a single armoured train of wagons coupled together is treated as a platoon. The Polish units in this selector are either new, and can be found in the section on introducing Armoured Trains to your game (see here), or are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies* book.

Sufficient transport facilities must be available for each Infantry Section included in the force.

POLISH ARMOURED TRAIN PLATOON

1 Command/Assault Wagon
1 Armoured Engine
1 Infantry Section

plus:

0–1 Lieutenant, Captain or Major
0–1 Medic
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery or Air)
0–1 Command/Assault Wagon
0–4 Infantry Sections
0–2 Polish Gun Wagons
0–2 Polish TKS Tankette Railway Carriages
0–1 Polish Light Tank Railway Carriage

Ursus heavy armoured car

POLISH CAVALRY SQUADRON

Cavalry formed about 10% of the Polish Army in 1939. Cavalry units were organised in 11 cavalry brigades, each composed of three to four cavalry regiments with organic artillery, armoured unit and infantry battalion. The retention of cavalry by the Poles was not crass conservatism;

Poland's budget was too small for total mechanisation of their army and horse cavalry offered good mobility in the undeveloped marshy eastern borderlands.

Polish horsemen fought as infantry and had high morale. They were considered to be the elite of the army. A Polish cavalry squadron would normally consist of an HQ troop, three troops of six men and an LMG section of five men.

The Polish units in this selector are either new, in which case their names can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Weiss*, starting here, or are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies* book.

POLISH CAVALRY SQUADRON REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second
2 Cavalry sections or Dragoons

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)
0–1 Medic

Infantry

0–3 Cavalry sections or Dragoons
0–1 Bicycle section
0–1 Machine gun team
0–1 Mortar team: 81mm medium mortar
0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Artillery

0–1 Artillery unit from: Anti-tank gun: Bofors 37mm light anti-tank gun
Field artillery: Light field gun (howitzer), 75mm Armata Polowa
Anti-aircraft gun: Bofors 40mm heavy automatic cannon

Armoured Car
0–1 Armoured car: wz.29 Ursus or wz.34

Tankette
0–1 TKS tankette

Transports and Tows
0–1 Transport vehicles per infantry section: Truck, field car or PZInz 222 half-track
0–1 **Tow:** Truck or PZInz 222 half-track

SPECIAL RULES

- Dragoons: Many of these cavalry units would have dismounted and their horses removed to a place of safety prior to the battle. This is the same as a Cavalry section (see page 77 of the Armies of France and the Allies book), but the section is bought dismounted at -2pts per man.
- Bicycle Section: This is the same as an Infantry section (see page 76 of the Armies of France and the Allies book), but the section is bought mounted on bicycles for +1pt per man. Bicycle-mounted infantry follow the same rules as infantry, except when moving entirely on a road, in which case they double their Run move to 24” (this move cannot be used to assault). In addition, the first time they receive any order other than Run, or if they receive a pinning marker, they dismount and abandon their bicycles for the rest of the game; replace the models with models on foot.
- The Communication Breakdown, No Hope of Retreat and Elite Officer

Class army special rules are in effect, as described on page 75 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement.

LEGENDS OF POLAND

ROMAN EDMUND ORLIK

"...it is very hard to hit such a small cockroach with a gun" – Unknown Panzer officer

On 18 September 1939, SFC Roman Edmund Orlik, a Polish university student commanding a two-man light TKS tankette with a 20mm cannon, knocked out three Panzer 35(t)s from ambush while reconnoitring a wood. The next day he took out seven before running out of ammunition. He survived the war to continue his education and become an architect, dying in 1982.

ORLIK'S TKS TANKETTE

Cost: 140pts (Veteran)

Weapons: 1 hull-mounted light automatic cannon

Damage Value: 7+ (tankette)

Special Rules:

- Recce.
- Fierce Ambush: the tankette may fire its main gun twice against the same or two different targets whenever it fires from ambush.

Skills:

- Eye for Terrain: The vehicle may hide (as if it was using the hidden deployment rules) provided it ends its move in cover at least 12" away from any enemy unit.
- Deadeye: Add 3 to any shot's to hit modifier.
- Skill Shot: Add D3 to the penetration value of any shot.
- Eagle Eye: The vehicle may react by shooting first at an attacker to

which it has line of sight when it is nominated as a target of a ranged attack or assault.

- Note: Skills may only be used ONCE per game – see *Tank War* for more details.

LEGENDS OF POLAND

COLONEL STANISLAW MACZEK

Stanislaw Maczek was drafted into the Austro-Hungarian army in World War I. He fought on the Italian front and was field promoted to Lieutenant. He formed an elite motorised unit in 1919 in the Polish-Ukrainian War being promoted to major, so he was the obvious choice to take command of Poland's first motorised brigade, the famous 10th. In 1940, he prepared a report on German Blitzkrieg tactics and offered to reform the 10th to defend France, but the French military were not interested. The Germans discovered the report after the Fall of France, still unopened. In 1944 Maczek commanded 1st Polish Armoured with his usual drive and closed the Falaise Gap, resulting in the destruction of 14 German divisions. After the war he was stripped of his Polish citizenship by the Polish communist party and refused a pension by the British government on the grounds that he wasn't a soldier. He made ends meet by working as a barman in Scotland.

Cost: 170pts

Team: 1 officer and up to 2 other men

Weapons: Rifles, pistols or submachine guns, as depicted on the models

Options:

- May be accompanied by up to 2 men at a cost of +13pts per man

Special Rules:

- Tactical Brilliance: his Morale bonus is +4 and the range of his ability is 12”.
- Inspirational Mechanised Leader: Any vehicle using his Morale bonus for an Order check can reroll it if the first attempt fails.

Polish lancers lead the attack

POLISH BLACK BRIGADE SQUADRON

The Polish 10th Motorised Cavalry Brigade was called the Black Brigade because of the black leather jackets worn by officers and NCOs. It was the only fully motorised infantry unit available to the Polish Army in 1939. It is famous for never losing a battle, eventually escaping over the Hungarian border when Poland collapsed. The 10th became the core of the Polish 1st Armoured Division, which fought from Normandy to northern Germany.

The Polish units in this selector are either new, in which case their names can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Weiss*, starting here, or are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies* book.

POLISH BLACK BRIGADE SQUADRON REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant: First or Second

2 Infantry Sections (10th motorised cavalry brigade infantry section) plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain, Major or Colonel *Maczek*

0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)

Infantry

0–3 Infantry sections (10th Motorised Cavalry Brigade infantry section)

0–1 Machine gun team, MMG

0–1 Mortar team: 81mm medium mortar

0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Field artillery

0–1 Gun from:

Anti-tank gun: Bofors 37mm anti-tank gun

Light field gun: 75mm Armata Polowa or medium howitzer 100mm Skoda

Anti-aircraft gun: Bofors 40mm anti-aircraft gun

Armoured Car

0–1 Armoured car from Wz.29 Ursus or Wz.34

Tankette

0–1 Tankette from TKS (note: about one in four was equipped with a 20mm autocannon) or Orlik's TKS tankette

Tank

0–1 Tank from Vickers E (note: about one third were Type A with two MMG turrets, the rest Type B with a 47mm light anti-tank gun and coaxial MMG)

Transports and Tows

0–1 Transport vehicles from Lazik, Truck or PZInz 222 half-track per infantry unit

0–1 Tow vehicle from Truck, C4P half-track truck, C2P or C7P artillery tractor per gun

SPECIAL RULES

- All units must be Regular or Veteran.
- The Communication Breakdown, No Hope of Retreat and Elite Officer Class army special rules are in effect, as described on page 75 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement.

Polish Black Brigade section

GERMAN DANZIG MILITIA

The units in this selector are either new, in which case their names can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Weiss*, starting here, or are as described in the *Armies of Germany* book.

GERMAN DANZIG MILITIA REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Second Lieutenant

2 Infantry sections from SS-Heimwehr Danzig, Sturmabteilung and

Ordnungspolizei

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Second Lieutenant

4TH PANZER DIVISION

4th Panzer was raised at Wurzburg in 1938. For the invasion of Poland it was part of General von Reichenau's 10th Army and with 1st Panzer spearheaded the drive to Warsaw, arriving at the city on 8 September, 1939. The Division's tank strength at the start of the battle was 183 Panzer I, 130 Panzer II, 12 Panzer IV and 16 PzBef (command vehicles): a ratio of roughly 15:10:1:1. This ratio needs to be born in mind when making choices from the selector.

The units in this selector are either new, in which case their names can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Weiss*, here, or they are as described in the *Armies of Germany* or *Tank War* books.

4TH PANZER DIVISION ARMOURED PLATOON

1 Command vehicle from: SdKfz 263 Funkspähwagen (8-Rad), SdKfz 265 *Panzerbefehlswagen* Pz I, SdKfz 267-268 *Panzerbefehlswagen* Pz III

2 Tanks from: Panzer I or Panzer II Ausf A,B, C or F

plus:

Infantry

0–1 Captain or Major

0–1 Medic

0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery or Air)

0–3 Infantry sections: Heer infantry squad, Kradschützen squad, a maximum of 1 Heer Pioneer squad
0–1 Sniper team
0–2 MMG teams
0–1 Mortar team: light or medium
0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Infantry
0–4 Infantry sections (as above)
0–1 MMG team
0–1 Sapper team

Artillery
0–2 Light howitzers
0–1 Medium howitzer

Armoured Cars
0–3 Steyr heavy armoured cars

SPECIAL RULES

•Hitler's Buzz Saw: See *Armies of Germany*, page 19.
•All units must be either Regular or Inexperienced.

Artillery
0–1 Artillery unit from:
Artillery gun: light or medium
Anti-aircraft gun: Flak 38, Flak 36 or 88mm AA/AT Flak 36

Armoured Car
0–1 Armoured car or Recce vehicle: Kfz 13, SdKfz 222 or SdKfz 231

(6-Rad)

Tanks, Tank Destroyers, Self-propelled artillery and Anti-aircraft vehicles

0–2 Vehicles from: Panzer I, Panzer II Ausf A,B, C or F, Panzer IV Aus A, SdKfz 251/2, SdKfz 7/1 and 7/2 (armoured cab) or SdKfz 10/4 with Flak 38

Transport and Tows

The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: Kubelwagen, truck, SdKfz 7 or 10, or Hanomag SdKfz 251/1. One Hanomag per army may be upgraded to a 251/10. It **must** also include a tow for the artillery piece, if chosen, from: truck, SdKfz 7 or 10, or Hanomag SdKfz 251/1

SPECIAL RULES

- Panzer IV shortage: Only one may be selected for the entire army irrespective of the number of platoons.
- The Initiative Training and Hitler's Buzz Saw army special rules are in effect, as described on page 19 of the *Armies of Germany* supplement.

OPERATION *WESERÜBUNG*, DENMARK & NORWAY

The battle of Kvam, by John White © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Campaign 183: *Denmark and Norway 1940*.

INTRODUCTION

The German military, thinking in purely tactical/operational mode as usual, wanted the peninsula of Denmark for air bases from which to defend the industrial zones of northern Germany. Similarly, Norway was wanted for naval bases with access to the open Atlantic. Hitler was concerned to protect the supply of high grade Swedish iron ore that was vital to the German war economy by using Denmark and Norway as a shield to close the Baltic against British incursions. He had every reason to fear a British takeover of Norway.

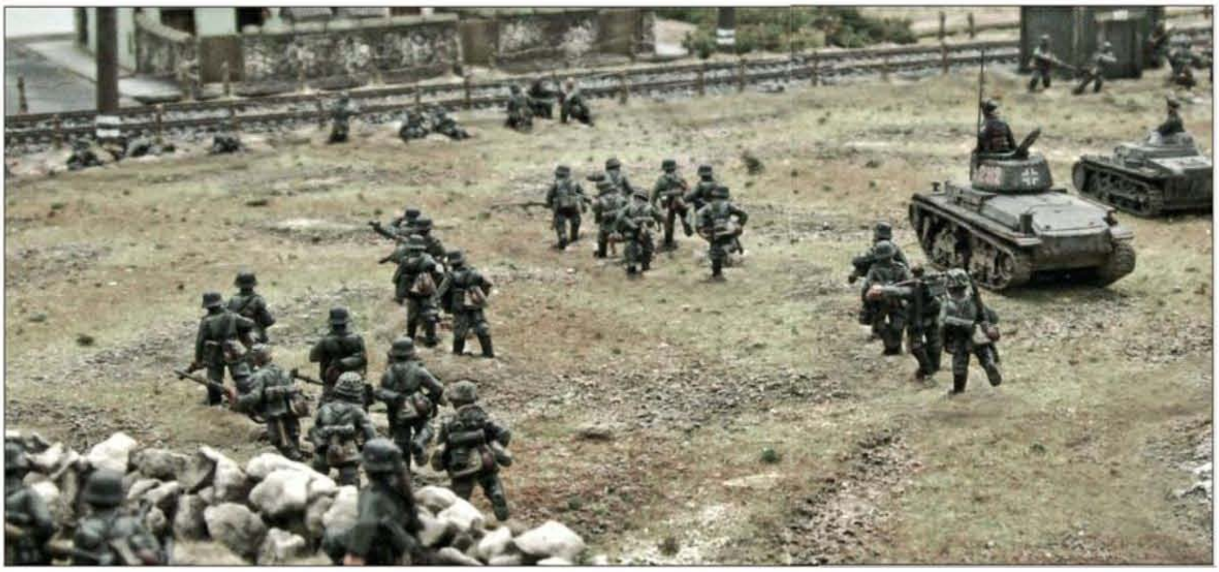
Denmark was indefensible and fell within six hours. Norway was more of a problem for the Reich because of geography and the challenging nature of the country's terrain. The Royal Navy could not easily stop German forces moving into southern Norway through Denmark, but they could use their control of the North Sea to land troops at will along the long Norwegian coastline. In the event Norway took four months to subdue despite the Norwegian army lacking any anti-tank capability and a great deal of confusion in the allied landings.

The campaign soon became an irrelevant sideshow given events elsewhere. In France, German tanks reached the Channel on 20 May. The British Army evacuated through Dunkirk from 26 May and on 5 June *Fall Rot*, the final conquest of France, commenced. Against that background, the Allies' withdrawal from Norway on 7 June was inevitable.

Operation *Weserübung* had a number of long-term consequences. The first was that Hitler's strategic goal of protecting Swedish iron ore supplies was achieved. However, other than that, the campaign was wholly to the Allied advantage. The German surface fleet ceased to exist as a serious threat after Norway. The Kriegsmarine lost ten destroyers (amounting to half its destroyer fleet), one heavy and two light cruisers, and several U-boats and smaller vessels. Indeed, Germany had just one heavy cruiser, two light cruisers, and four destroyers available for operations after *Weserübung*. With such a paltry force Operation *Seelöwe*, the invasion of Britain, was a dead duck.

The other German disadvantage was more subtle. The German occupation force in Norway consisted of at least 350,000 people of which 192,000 were troops. This garrison was worse than useless, as it required logistical supply despite being strategically unimportant.

Every victory, every conquest stretched the German army a little thinner as fronts expanded and larger and larger armies of occupation were required.



Blitzkrieg!

TIMELINE

1940

27 January: Operation *Weserübung* formulated

16 February: HMS *Cossack* boards the German tanker *Altmark* which was using Norwegian waters to transport British prisoners of war in breach of international law

13 March: British troops start to board ships to invade Norway but the operation is cancelled the same day as the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union ends

2 April: Hitler authorises Operation *Weserübung*

7 April: German fleet sails

9 April: German forces cross the Danish border and Denmark surrenders six hours later

9 April: German forces capture Oslo, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim and Narvik

10 April: Royal Navy attacks German shipping in First battle of Narvik

13 April: Second battle of Narvik

14 April: Norwegian 1st Division retreats into Sweden

14 April: British 24th Guards Brigade lands at Harstad

15 April: Norwegian 3rd Division surrenders

16 April: British 146th Brigade lands at Namsos

18 April: British 148th Brigade lands at Åndalsnes

22 April: Battle of Lillehammer between British and German forces

23 April: Battle of Vith

23 April: British 15th Brigade lands at Åndalsnes

24 April: Battle of Kvam

28 April: French 27e Demi-Brigade Chasseurs Alpin lands near Narvik

30 April: Norwegian 4th Division surrenders ending fighting in southern Norway

2 May: Sickleforce (British 15th and 148th Brigades) evacuated from Åndalsnes

3 May: Mauriceforce (British 146th Brigade and French 5e *Demi-Brigade*) evacuated from Namsos

6 May: French 13e Demi-Brigade Foreign Legion lands near Narvik

9 May: Polish Podhale Brigade lands near Narvik

28 May: French and Norwegian forces retake Narvik

7 June: Evacuation of remaining Allied forces from Narvik
8 June: Norwegian 6th Division surrenders near Narvik
28 July: Remnants of German battlefleet limp into Kiel

The Norwegian campaign would ultimately prove disastrous for the German navy, which could ill-afford the losses it sustained. The British, who could easily afford the broadly comparable losses suffered by the Royal Navy, were perhaps fortunate that German U-boats had not scored more success. German torpedoes suffered from two major faults: their magnetic detonators often failed to work, and – more fundamentally – the torpedoes ran about six feet too deep, often passing right underneath smaller British ships.

SCENARIO 5: ROAD BLOCK

The Danish government had prior notice of the invasion but refused to allow its army to mobilise or to take up defensive positions, so battles largely consisted of German advanced formations running into scattered Danish improvised road blocks.

At Lundtoftbjerg a German column ran into a Danish platoon armed with two 20mm guns and a light machine gun, which had taken up positions covering the road. The Germans lost two *armoured cars* and three motorcycles, while the Danes suffered one dead and one wounded. This battle is typical of the encounters as German columns raced up the Jutland peninsula.

In a pattern that was to become familiar during the Blitzkrieg, ground attack planes were called up to suppress defences whenever a German column was held up for any length of time.

FORCES

GERMAN INVASION OF DENMARK FORCE

The German invasion force for Denmark consisted largely of the 170th and the 198th Infantry divisions. A single parachute battalion seized Storstrøm Bridge and the coastal fortress on Masnedø Island to facilitate the 198th advancing to Copenhagen and Aalborg. Aalborg airfield was the stepping stone to Norway and hence the German primary objective. This was the world's first airborne attack.

Use the '1939 – The September campaign' selector from *Armies of Germany* supplement. Note that the only armoured fighting vehicles available to these divisions were armoured cars, supplemented by a few Panzer I tanks.

THE DANISH ARMY

The Danish forces use the Danish Army Reinforced Platoon (see here).

THE BATTLE

Use ‘Scenario 1: Envelopment’ from the *Bolt Action* rulebook to recreate the battle at a Danish road block.

The Germans are the attackers – obviously – and the Danes are the defenders. The terrain should have a road running vertically down the centre of the table from the attacker’s to the defender’s table edge. An improvised road block (linear obstacle) should be placed in the defender’s set-up zone. The Danes had but hours to improvise so the player may use his imagination freely as to what the road block consists off.

These road blocks seem to have been created where roads entered villages, presumably to give the defenders some cover, so the player may scatter a few buildings around his set-up zone. Alternatively, put some woodland there.

German Kradschützen

German Heer MG34 MMG team

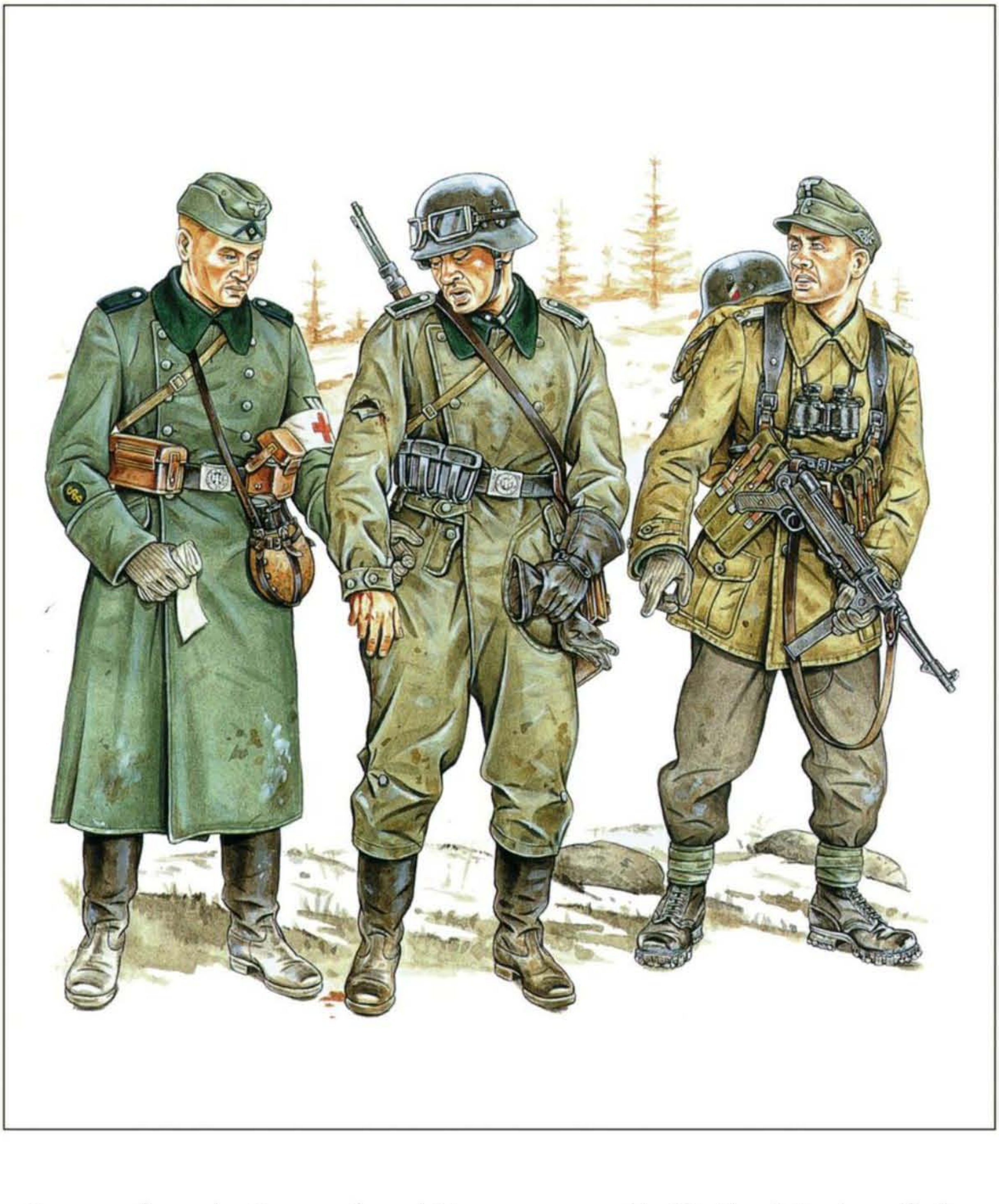
PLAYER NOTES

This is a classic *Bolt Action* Blitzkrieg game. Players should not lose sight of the fact that the two sides have very different objectives.

The German player receives three victory points for every German unit leaving the table on the defender's side and two merely for getting a unit into the defending set-up zone. Conversely, killing enemy units is worth but one victory point. The job of the German player is to press on with the Blitzkrieg. Bypassed enemy units may be safely left to be mopped up by following forces.

The defender scores two victory points for every enemy unit destroyed. However, it should not be overlooked that the Danish player is swinging the victory point balance in his favour merely by immobilising German units with pin markers so they cannot advance into his set-up zone.

The German player has to fight a battle of manoeuvre to win. He can achieve victory without destroying a single Danish unit. Conversely the aim of the Danish player should be to bog things down into a battle of attrition. A pointless exchange of fire where units are exchanged on a one for one basis would suit the Danish player very well.



German forces in Denmark and Norway, 1940 (L–R): Sanitätsobergefreiter, Sanitätskompanie 1/234; Unterfeldwebel, 198. Infanteriedivision; Oberleutnant, Gebirgsjägerregiment 138, by Stephen Andrew © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Men-at-Arms 311: The German Army 1939–45 (1).

SCENARIO 6: LANDSHIP

On 13 April 1940, Kampfgruppe Pellengahr was fighting to the east of Oslo and cleared its flanks in a series of engagements, then pushing north into central Norway. The Norwegian 1st Infantry Regiment was defeated and forced to retreat into Sweden where they were interned.

Kampfgruppe Pellengahr reached the frozen Lake Mjøsa, the largest in Norway, and attacked the Norwegian forces deployed on either side. The Sherwood Foresters, inexperienced British troops with little ammunition and no artillery, were rushed south by train and broken into companies to reinforce the Norwegians. They held for a day before being pushed back to Fåberg and then to Tretten Gorge where they made a last stand reinforced by two companies from the Leicestershires. There the remnants of the British 148th Brigade were destroyed, losing 706 men.

Reinforcing failure, the British deployed the 15th Brigade south into the meat grinder. The 15th had lost all of its motor transport, artillery, ammunition and rations to U-boat attacks so consisted only of infantry and a single anti-tank company. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry reached Kevla just hours before the vanguard of Kampfgruppe Pellengahr. Astonishingly, the KOYLI held out for two days despite being under a constant attack that included artillery and air bombardment before retreating in good order to the next defensive position when outflanked.

This pattern repeated until it became clear to even the most optimistic British strategist that further defence of central Norway was impossible.

FORCES

The British force is drawn from the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry Reinforced Platoon (see here).

The German force is drawn from the Kampfgruppe Pellengahr selector (see here).

THE BATTLE

I have chosen to recreate the Battle of Kevla for a scenario because it was the first engagement where the Allies had a fighting chance. The earlier engagements, where Allied infantry without air cover, artillery or anti-tank weapons attempted to hold off a mechanised column were completely one-sided.

The battle took place where the Germans, following a railway line alongside the River Lågen, emerged from a narrow defile into a valley used for agriculture.

Like so many of the Blitzkrieg battles this encounter was between a German force attempting a breakthrough and an Allied force attempting to block so use ‘Scenario 1: Envelopment’ from the *Bolt Action* rulebook.

The Germans are the attackers and the British the defenders.

The game should be played along the length of the table rather than across it to recreate the feel of an advance down a narrow valley. The left side of the table (from the defender’s point of view) is a hilly slope with thick woods at the edge. The right side is bounded by a railway line and river. Clumps of trees and vegetation scattered thinly through the valley offer cover for the beleaguered defenders.

Note that Reserves may **not** perform an outflanking manoeuvre.

PLAYER NOTES

This is an absolutely classic Blitzkrieg scenario depicting a German combined arms force against a decent infantry blocking force in terrain that restricts the attacker’s deployment. The British light infantry had chosen their position well, forcing the kampfgruppe to make a frontal assault. The prohibition against reserves outflanking is unlikely to worry the British player unduly given the scenario objectives.

Players should not lose sight of their objectives. The German player scores three victory points for exiting units off the defender's table edge, two for units in the defender's set-up zone, but only one for killing an enemy unit. So a good German player strategy is to keep British units pinned down while his units storm across the table.

The British player should endeavour to stop German units exiting the table at all costs. Those three victory points per exiting unit are difficult to claw back. Otherwise, he should try to set up a battle of attrition. Exchanging units on a 1:1 basis is entirely to the British player's advantage as it yields a 2:1 victory point advantage.

A tricky decision for players in this scenario is whether to have a few powerful sections or many small sections of infantry, because victory points are based on units rather than capturing objectives. On balance the German player is best served by more units, so he can score more victory points for getting units across the table. On the other hand, be wary of making the German units so weak that they evaporate too easily, piling up two victory points a time for your opponent.

Conversely the British player is probably best served by fewer, larger infantry sections: but make sure you have enough units to block all avenues of approach and provide a reserve.

Everything's a trade-off, which is why *Bolt Action* is such a challenging game.

LANDSHIPS

The idea of tank as landship took a surprisingly long time to die. The most successful tanks of World War I were the large British heavy tanks with multiple guns. The light French Renault FT17 introduced the classic tank layout with a weapon in a top-mounted rotating turret. It was perhaps inevitable that attempts would be made to mate the two ideas to produce a multi-turreted landship.

In 1924 the British army ordered the prototype of a multi-turreted heavy tank, a landship in other words. The result was the Vickers A1E1 Independent. This was a large machine with a 47mm anti-tank gun in a central rotating turret and four machine guns in smaller turrets positioned to cover all arcs. One of the MMGs had an AA mount. The design was not followed up and the official reason was lack of funds, but the truth is that the Independent was expensive and inefficient.

The Independent story has a strange postscript. In 1933, a certain Norman Baillie Stewart (real name Wright), who was a subaltern in the Seaforth Highlanders, borrowed the Independent plans from a military library and sold them to the Germans for £90. The Nazis wasted time and money on landship development before cancelling the whole idea after building five three-turret prototypes (see the *Neubaufahrzeug*).

The Independent story took another twist when the plans also found their way to the Soviet Union. The landship heresy infected the Russians, leading to orders in 1930 for five turret tanks closely based on the then top secret A1E1, later reduced to two and three turret models. The end result was the T35, T100 and T28.

Multi-turreted landships all demonstrated the same flaws. They were too large, too slow and too clumsy. Their sheer size meant that their armour was inadequate. The multi-turret design was impossible for the commander to control as he could only identify one target at a time anyway.

The Independent created so much havoc in tank construction amongst Britain's potential enemies that one is tempted to wonder whether the Germans and Russians were caught by an MI6 sting operation. Alas, wishful thinking all round is a more likely explanation.

ADDITIONAL UNITS

GENERIC UNIT OPTIONS

HORSE-DRAWN LIMBER

Only the British army was fully mechanised at the start of World War II, partly because it was tiny in comparison to the armies of the continental powers. France mobilised half a million horses for the war and Germany two and three-quarter million. Leaving aside logistics and cavalry, the main use of horses was to pull artillery. This was particularly true of German infantry divisions. Incidentally, when Germany expanded its army it bought a significant portion of the necessary horses from the British army, which was motorising at the time.

Horse-drawn limbers are available as Tow choices for any army. They are treated as wheeled vehicles, except as noted below.

Cost: 8pts (Inexperienced), 10pts (Regular), 12pts (Veteran).
Weapons: none.
Damage Value: 3+ (literally soft-skinned)
Tow: Any gun or howitzer
Special Rules:
•Slow (only when towing)

GERMAN UNITS

NEUBAUFAHRZEUG PZKPW V MODEL A

Another example of the design dead end of multi-turreted tanks, the original Panzer V was intended to be a heavy breakthrough tank. It had all the usual landship problems, and in any case such a slow, heavy, unreliable design had no tactical function in a Panzer division. Five prototypes were constructed, and some were even combat-tested in Norway, but the tank never went into production.

Cost: 112pts (Inexperienced)

Weapons: 1 turret-mounted light howitzer with coaxial light antitank gun, one turret-mounted MMG covering the front and right arc, one turret-mounted MMG covering the rear and left arc

Damage Value: 8+ (light tank)

Options:

- Model B, convert light howitzer to medium howitzer for +20pts

Special Rules:

- Coaxial cannon: Tanks with two coaxial heavy weapons in a single turret may only fire one weapon per turn
- Slow

THE DANISH ARMY LIST

HEADQUARTERS UNITS

OFFICER

Cost: Second Lieutenant 35pts (Inexperienced), 50pts (Regular)

First Lieutenant 60pts (Inexperienced), 75pts (Regular)

Captain 95pts (Inexperienced), 110pts (Regular)

Major 135pts (Inexperienced), 150pts (Regular)

Team: 1 officer and up to 2 further men

Weapons: Pistol, submachine gun or rifle as depicted on the models

Options:

- The officer may be accompanied by two men at a cost of +7pts per man (Inexperienced) or +10pts per man (Regular)

MEDIC

Cost: Medic 23pts (Regular)

Team: 1 medic and up to 2 further men

Weapons: Pistol or none as depicted on the models

Options:

- May be accompanied by two men at a cost of +10pts per man

FORWARD OBSERVER

The Danish Army had a handful of heavy artillery pieces mostly used for coastal defence.

Cost: Artillery Forward Observer 100pts (Regular)

Team: 1 officer and up to 2 further men

Weapons: Pistol or rifle as depicted on the models

Options:

- May be accompanied by two men at a cost of +10pts per man

INFANTRY SECTIONS AND TEAMS

INEXPERIENCED INFANTRY SECTION

These represent the bulk of the Danish Army.

Cost: 35pts (Inexperienced)
Team: 1 NCO and 4 men
Weapons: Rifles
Options:

- Add up to 6 additional men with rifles at +7pts each
- One soldier may have a Madsen M1924 LMG for +20pts. Another soldier becomes the loader

EXPERIENCED INFANTRY SECTION

These should be selected sparingly.

Cost: 50pts (Regular)
Team: 1 NCO and 4 men
Weapons: Rifles
Options:

- Add up to 6 additional men with rifles at +10pts each
- One soldier may have a Madsen M1924 LMG for +20pts. Another soldier becomes the loader
- The NCO may have an SMG for +3pts (this option should be used sparingly as SMGs were just being introduced into the Danish army in 1940)

CAVALRY SECTION

The Danish army still fielded eight horsed squadrons, divided into two regiments. As dragoons, they normally fought dismounted. The cavalry regiments also had motorised infantry in trucks and on motorcycles, and light anti-tank guns.

Cost: 60pts (Regular)
Team: 1 mounted NCO and 4 cavalrymen
Weapons: Cavalry carbines
Options:
- Add up to 7 additional cavalrymen with rifles at +12pts each

Special Rules:
- Cavalry carbines count as rifles when fired dismounted, and as pistols when fired from horseback.

MACHINE GUN TEAM

The Danish Army was equipped with M1929 Madsen MMGs.

Cost: 35pts (Inexperienced)
Team: 1 NCO and 4 men
Weapons: 1 MMG
Special Rules:
- Team weapon
- Fixed

MEDIUM MORTAR TEAM

Each Danish infantry battalion had six 81mm Brandt mortars.

Cost: 35pts (Inexperienced)
Team: 1 NCO and 4 men
Weapons: 1 medium mortar
Options:
- May add spotter for +10pts

Special Rules:

- Team weapon
- Fixed
- Indirect fire
- HE (D6)

FIELD ARTILLERY

75MM KRUPP 1902 LIGHT ARTILLERY

An outdated German design but still reasonably effective.

Cost: 40pts (Inexperienced)

Team: 3 men

Weapons: 1 light howitzer

Options:

- May add spotter for +10pts

Special Rules:

- Gun shield
- Team weapon
- Fixed
- Howitzer
- HE (D6)

MEDIUM ARTILLERY

Denmark could field 72 105mm guns.

Cost: 60pts (Inexperienced)

Team: 4 men

Weapons: 1 medium howitzer

Options:

- May add spotter for +10pts

Special Rules:

- Gun shield
- Team weapon
- Fixed
- Howitzer
- HE (2D6)

HEAVY ARTILLERY

Denmark could field 36 150mm Schneiders.

Cost: 92pts (Inexperienced)

Team: 5 men

Weapons: 1 heavy howitzer

Options:

- May add spotter for +10pts

Special Rules:

- Gun shield
- Team weapon
- Fixed
- Howitzer
- HE (3D6)

ANTI-TANK GUNS

MADSEN 20/23MM MACHINE CANNON M/38

The Danes mounted the versatile Madsen automatic cannon on a field carriage and used it very successfully as an anti-tank gun. They proved to be highly skilled in its use, knocking out 11 armoured cars and two Panzer I tanks during the brief invasion.

Cost: 32pts (Inexperienced), 40pts (Regular)

Team: 3 men

Weapons: 1 light automatic cannon

Special Rules:

- Team weapon
- Fixed

BOFORS 37MM LIGHT ANTI-TANK GUN

Cost: 40pts (Inexperienced), 50pts (Regular)

Team: 3 men

Weapons: 1 light anti-tank gun

Special Rules:

- Gun shield
- Team weapon
- Fixed

ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS

MADSEN LIGHT ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN

Essentially the same gun as the Madsen anti-tank cannon but placed on an AA carriage. 36 were fielded.

Cost: 36pts (Inexperienced), 45pts (Regular)

Team: 3 men

Weapons: 1 light automatic cannon

Special Rules:

- Team weapon
- Fixed
- Flak

ARMOURED CARS

LANDSVERK LYNX LIGHT ARMOURED CAR

A Swedish-built 4x4 light armoured car armed with the Madsen M1933 L60 20mm auto cannon and 8mm Madsen M1924 medium machine gun. Only three were delivered before the German invasion.

Cost: 96pts (Inexperienced), 120pts (Regular)
Weapons: 1 turret-mounted light automatic cannon with coaxial MMG, one forward facing and one rear facing hull MMGs
Damage Value: 7+ (armoured car)
Special Rules:
- Recce (dual direction steering)

LANDSVERK L-180 HEAVY ARMOURED CAR

These Swedish-built six-wheeled armoured cars had a good reputation for reliability and general build quality. In Danish service they were armed with the Madsen M1933 L60 20mm auto cannon and the 8mm Madsen M1924 medium machine gun. Only two seem to have been purchased.

Cost: 84pts (Inexperienced), 105pts (Regular)
Weapons: 1 turret-mounted light automatic cannon with coaxial MMG, and forward facing hull MMG
Damage Value: 7+ (armoured car)
Special Rules:
- Recce

TRANSPORTS AND TOWS

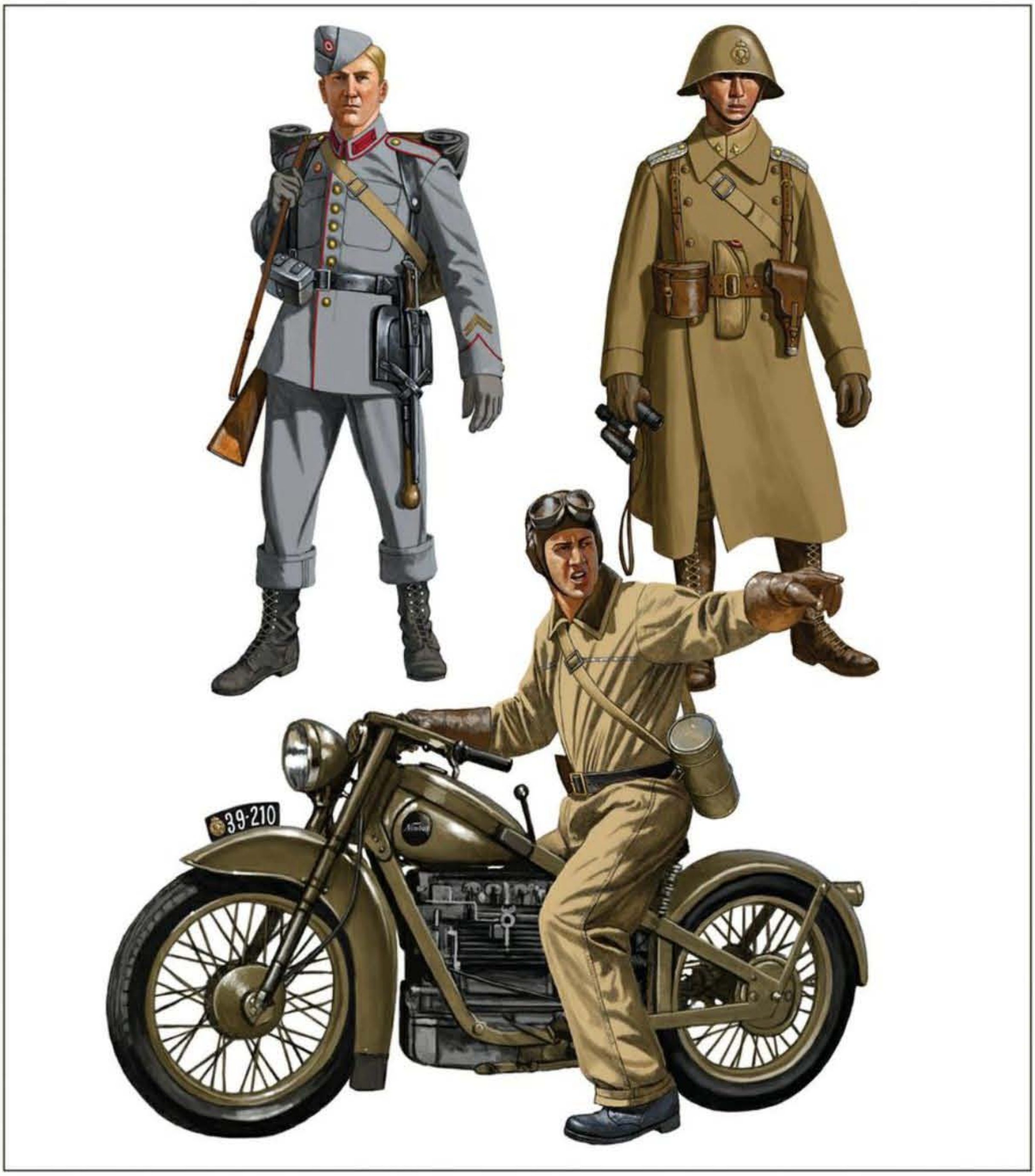
TEMPO GELÄNDWAGEN 1200

Around 20 of these 4x4 light utility cars made in Hamburg were purchased.

Cost: 17pts (Inexperienced), 21pts (Regular)
Weapons: None
Damage Value: 6+ (soft-skin)
Transport: 3 men
Tow: May tow light guns

TRUCK

Cost: 31 pts (Inexperienced), 39pts (Regular)
Weapons: None
Damage Value: 6+ (soft-skin)
Transport: 12 men
Tow: May tow light or medium guns



Danish troops, southern Jutland, 1940 (Top, L–R): Korporal, 14th AA Bn; Sekondlejtant, Lundtoftebjerg Detachment, 4th Inf Bn; (Bottom): Menig, 2nd Bn, Inf Pioneer Command, by Johnny Shumate © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Men-at-Arms 493: Hitler's Blitzkrieg Enemies 1940.

THEATRE SELECTORS

THE DANISH ARMY

The Danish Army was tiny: about 15,000 men were in arms when the Germans invaded, but half were inexperienced conscripts with perhaps six months experience. However, it was well equipped by 1940 standards. Some Danish troops had fought in the Winter War for Finland so could be considered Regulars.

DANISH ARMY REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second
2 Inexperienced Infantry sections

plus:

Headquarters
0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)
0–1 Medic

Infantry
0–4 Infantry sections: Inexperienced infantry section, Experienced infantry section, cavalry section
0–1 MMG
0–1 Mortar team: medium mortar

Artillery
0–2 guns from:
Field artillery: Light, medium or heavy howitzer
Anti-tank guns: Light 20mm automatic cannon, light 37mm anti-tank

gun
Anti-aircraft guns: Light 20mm anti-aircraft gun

Armoured Car
0–1 Armoured car: Landsverk Lynx or L-180

Transports and Tows
0–1 Transport vehicle per infantry or artillery unit: Truck or TG-1200

SPECIAL RULES

- Confusion: Danish units were without orders when the Germans invaded and uncertain whether to fight back or not. The opponent may make a free run move with D3 units on the first turn before an Order die is drawn.
- Waiting In Ambush: Danish units may start the game Hidden and with Ambush orders. They may not fire on opposing units making their D3 free first turn run moves.

KING'S OWN YORKSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

The KOYLI forced consisted of infantry companies supported by anti-tank artillery.

All the units in this selector can be found in the *Armies of Great Britain* supplement.

KING'S OWN YORKSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second
2 Infantry sections: Regular infantry sections (early war)

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain or major
0–1 Medic

Infantry

0–4 Infantry squads: Early war Regular or Inexperienced sections
0–2 MMG teams
0–1 Mortar team: light or medium
0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Artillery

0–1 Light anti-tank gun: 25mm Hotchkiss

Transports and Tows

0–1 Transport vehicle per infantry unit from truck or utility car
0–1 Tow from truck or utility car

SPECIAL RULES

- Baptism of Fire: The British units in the following selector are just as described in the *Armies of Great Britain* book. However, they **must** choose the Rapid Fire national characteristic and **cannot** be purchased as Veterans.

In addition, the following rules **replace** the *Bombardment* and *Artillery Support* army special rules.

- Resolute: British infantry were resolute in defence. If a British infantry or artillery unit that was treated as in cover when the enemy fired at it suffers enough casualties to cause a Morale check, the unit benefits from a +1 Morale modifier for the check.
- Sticky: British infantry and artillery tended to get separated from advancing armour. British infantry and artillery units must always take an

Order test when given an advance or run order, even if the unit is not pinned.

BEF anti-tank rifle team

KAMPFGRUPPE PELLENGAHR

Kampfgruppe Pellengahr consisted of two infantry battalions, six light and two heavy tanks, motorised machine gunners, and air support light bombers.

The units in this selector are either new, in which case their names can be found in the Additional Units section for Operation *Weserübung*, starting here, or are as described in the *Armies of Germany* book.

KAMPFGRUPPE PELLENGAHR REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second
2 Infantry sections

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Generalleutenant Pellengahr
0–1 Forward Observer (Air)
0–1 Medic

Infantry

0–4 Heer Infantry section, up to one Heer Pioneer section

0–2 MMG teams

0–1 Mortar team: light or medium

0–1 Flamethrower team

0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Artillery

0–2 Guns from:

Anti-tank gun: Pak 36

Field artillery: light or medium

Anti-aircraft gun: Flak 36 or 38, or 88mm AA/AT Flak 36

Armoured Car

0–1 armoured car or recce vehicle: Kfz13, SdKfz 222, SdKfz 231 (6-Rad)

Tanks

0–1 *Neubaufahrzeug* PzKpw V Model A

0–1 Panzer II

Transports and Tows

0–1 Transport vehicle per infantry unit: Truck or Field Car (Kubelwagen)

0–1 Tow : Truck or SdKfz 7

LEGENDS OF GERMANY

GENERALLEUTENANT PELLENGAHR

Richard Pellangahr, Knight's Cross, was commander of the 196th Infantry Division, an artillery specialist and one of those professional soldiers that made the German army so effective.

Cost: 180pts

Type: Veteran

Weapons: Pistol

Options:

- May be accompanied by up to two men at a cost of 13pts per man (Veteran)

Special Rules:

- Pellangahr's Morale bonus is +4
- Artillery Specialist: Any artillery piece within 6" of Pellangahr may reroll their rolls to hit when firing using the Indirect Fire rule

SdKfz 231 (6-rad) armoured car

GENERIC ALLIED NORWAY DEFENCE FORCE

This is a general-purpose allied selector for players to use when creating their own scenarios. It consists of Norwegian, British, Polish and French forces. Use the *Armies of Great Britain* and the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplements for more details on the individual units.

Use the Generic Reinforced Platoon selector from the core rulebook. Unit choices should be restricted to the following.

GENERIC ALLIED NORWAY DEFENCE FORCE REINFORCED PLATOON

Headquarters

Officers including Medics and Artillery Forward Observers: may be British, French or Norwegian

Air Forward Observers are not permitted – allied air cover was woeful

Infantry

British early war Regular or Inexperienced infantry squads; French Regular, Inexperienced or Foreign Legion infantry squads; any infantry squad choice from the Norwegian selector; Polish Regular infantry squads

British, French or Norwegian Machine Gun, Mortar teams and Sniper teams; British or French Boys Anti-Tank Rifle teams

The Norwegian campaign was bedevilled by shortcomings in planning and operations from the start, often leading to units taking the field without vital supplies, equipment or support. French troops landed off Namsos, for example, without any artillery or anti-aircraft guns, without mules to carry their equipment, and lacking their skis and snowshoes, simply because the ship carrying them was too large to get into the harbour!

Artillery

British, French or Norwegian Light and Medium Howitzers; British or French Light Anti-Tank Gun; British Anti-Aircraft Gun

Armoured Vehicles

British Bren Gun Carriers, Vickers MkVIB light tanks, French Hotchkiss H39 tanks

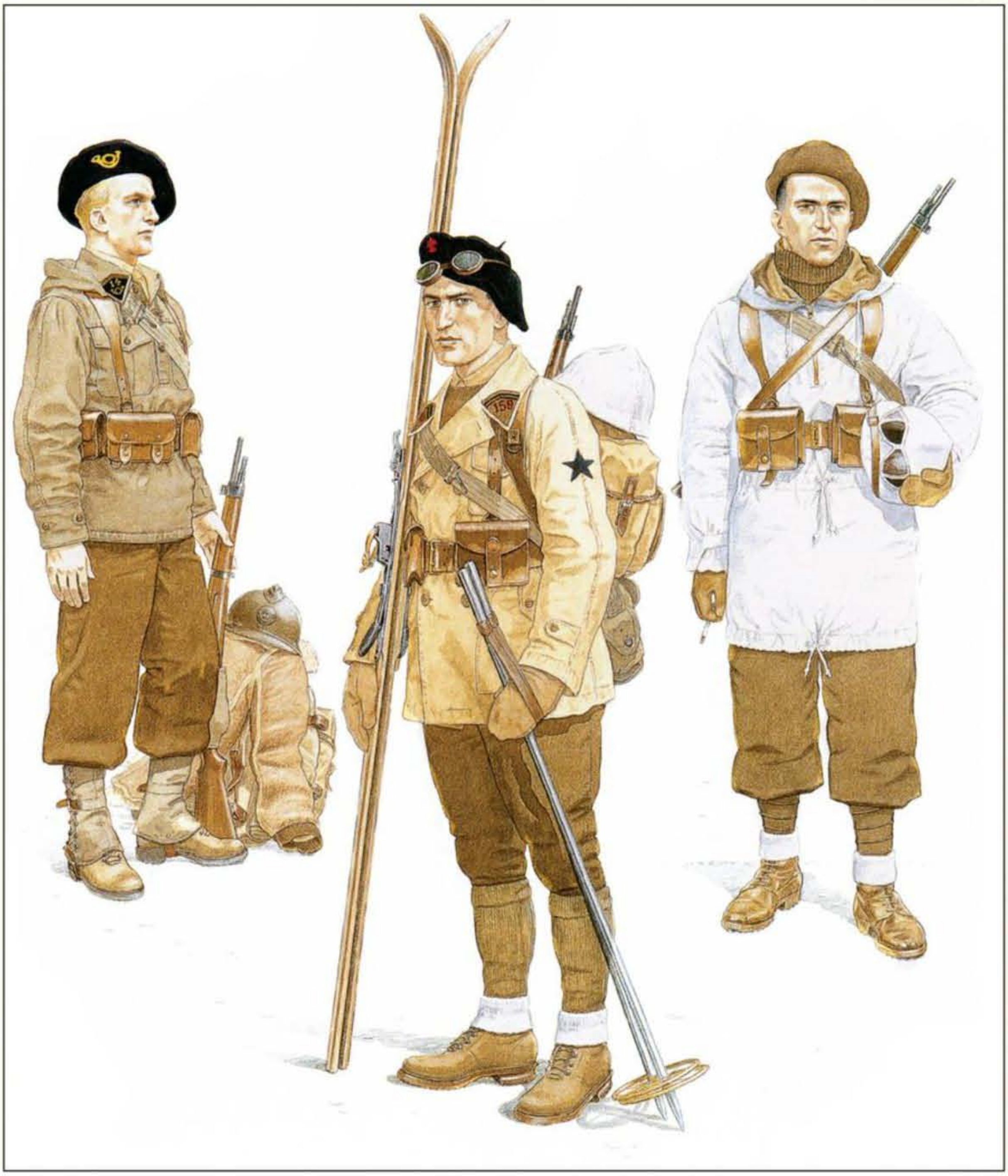
Transports and Tows

Any unarmoured British, French or Norwegian wheeled tows and transport vehicles

SPECIAL RULES

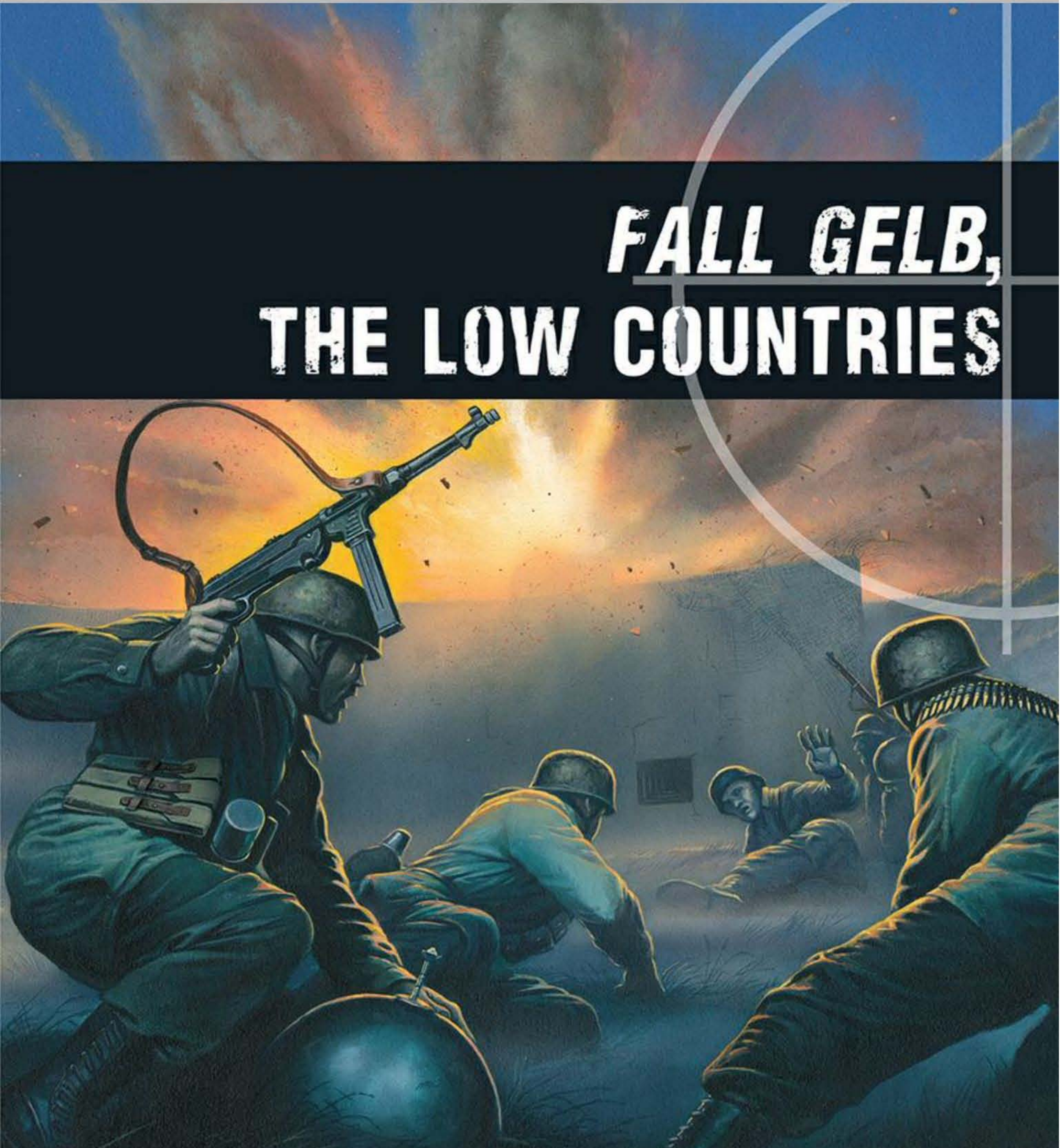
- Note that unless explicitly specified otherwise in the appropriate supplement, no Allied unit may be Veteran.
- Communication Breakdown (applies to the whole mixed force, see page 67 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* book)
- Baptism of Fire: The British units in the following selector are just as described in the *Armies of Great Britain* book. However, they **must** choose the Rapid Fire national characteristic and **cannot** be purchased as Veterans.
- Fieldcraft, Infiltration (applies only to Norwegian units, see page 67 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* book)
- Note that no other French, Polish and British army special rules apply.

French anti-tank rifle team



French troops, Norway Expedition, 1940 (L–R): Chasseur alpin; ski scout; légionnaire, 13e DBLE, by Mike Chappell © Osprey Publishing Ltd. Taken from Men-at-Arms 315: The French Army 1939–45 (1).

FALL GELB, THE LOW COUNTRIES



Eben Emael, by Mark Stacey © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Raid 38: *The Fall of Eben Emael.*

INTRODUCTION

"I could have wept for joy, they had fallen into the trap." – Adolf Hitler (upon hearing that the French had advanced into Belgium)

It would take a writer with a Shakespearian talent for tragedy to adequately cover the Fall of France in a few pithy lines and regrettably I am not he, but I will do my miserable best. The best overview is given by Alastair Horne in his seminal work *To Lose A Battle, France 1940* and I recommend this book to those who want to better understand this campaign.

Writing some 75 years on, it is difficult to grasp how seismic was the shockwave that travelled around the world when the German army crushed France. At the time, the French army was considered to be the best in the world.

The battle of France opened at midnight on 10 May 1940. Paris fell on 14 June after barely a month's fighting and France as a nation capitulated on 22 June. The world's most powerful military machine was removed from the European playing board in little more time than it takes to swat a fly.

The Allies lost 360,000 casualties, the bulk of them French, and the Germans captured nearly two million prisoners, again mostly French. Total Axis casualties were under 165,000.

The only Allied counter-move during the campaign that made any impact, however transient, on German operations was the attack by two small columns of unsupported British tanks and infantry on the 7th Panzer Division at Arras. Punching well above their weight, the British routed a Waffen SS regiment and inflicted such damage on 7th Panzer that the Germans reported being attacked by five infantry divisions.

The French army achieved almost nothing in the campaign except to lose men. How did this nation crumble so easily, a country that had sustained more than five and a half million casualties out of a population of less than 40 million in World War I and still won?

Belgian T-15 light tank

Humans like simple explanations of events, but the real world is often so complex that it can be near impossible to tease out the significant strands of cause and effect. There certainly were military reasons for the disaster. The French were ill-equipped with modern weapons; they lacked anti-tank guns, anti-aircraft guns and modern fighter planes. Their tanks were poorly designed and intended for the wrong kind of war. Their generals were old and out of touch. Leadership in the officer class was often abysmal, with officers deserting their positions or happily marching their men into captivity.

French strategy was utterly defensive and no war can be won that way. Hitler took an enormous gamble in 1939 when he attacked Poland; Germany was almost undefended in the West due to the German military policy of 'all stock in the shop window'. A serious French attack could have won World War II before it started, but the French did nothing.

In 1914 the French had been convinced that the Kaiser would attack out of the east and were caught flatfooted when the German army came through Belgium. Taking the lesson to heart, in 1940 they trundled into Belgium with their best motorised divisions as soon as the German attack started, leaving a trail of broken down and out of fuel tanks (the Dyle-Breda line plan). This time the Germans came through the Ardennes: a typical Hunnish trick, as Captain Mainwearing of the Walmington-on-Sea Home Guard might have put it.

Operationally, French military theory was obsessed with defending extended lines. This involved spreading their assets – including tanks – into thin crusts. Tactically, the French army frittered its mechanised forces away in a multitude of penny packets as they tried to block every country lane in northern France. As each line was penetrated, the French army fell back to the next, abandoning men and heavy weapons in the process. Without a mobile reserve, France had no possibility of restoring a penetrated line and the country was too small and too well served by road communications for the French army to fall back far enough for the Panzerwaffe not to overrun its supply and logistics (such as happened in Russia in 1941).

However, an army is merely the military extension of the country it serves, and the French nation was still traumatised by the terrible events of the last war. Losses in World War I were staggering. More than 4% of the entire population of France has perished. To put that in perspective the Ottoman Empire, Imperial Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire lost around 15%, 4% and 4% respectively, and all three empires collapsed. Indeed, the Russian Empire disintegrated after losing less than 2% of its total population.

France was still in shell shock in 1940 and politically polarised to the point of near revolution. The powerful Communist party not only opposed the war on the orders of its masters in Moscow, but also used its agents in factories to actively sabotage French military equipment. On the other side of the political divide, the French right wanted to create a fascist state, make peace with Germany and attack the Soviet Union. The French premiere Reynaud, who was right wing, was put in power by the left so had no firm power base. In addition, he spent much of his time dealing with the demands of his mistress, the formidable Comtesse Hélène de Portes.

Throughout the battle of France the French military supply depots worked only office hours.

The stage was set for tragedy.

Belgian infantry stand to their hastily prepared fortifications

The German attack through the Ardennes planned by von Manstein is sometimes touted as an example of a successful ‘deep thrust’. This is misleading. The fundamental German plan for *Fall Gelb* was a classic border battle with a single pincer, the *sichelschnitt*: a word devised apparently by Churchill. Only a single pincer was needed as the English Channel usefully served as the second arm.

The armoured pincer, Army Group A commanded by von Rundstedt, consisted of a little over 45 divisions of which seven were armoured: 1st Panzer (Kirchner, 276 tanks), 2nd Panzer (Veiel, 276 tanks), 5th Panzer (Hartleib, 324 tanks), 6th Panzer (Kempff, 218 tanks), 7th Panzer

(Rommel, 218 tanks), 8th Panzer (Kuntzen, 218 tanks) and 10th Panzer (Schael, 276 tanks).

The central pinning force that advanced through the Low Countries, Army Group B commanded by Von Bock, consisted of 29 divisions of which only three were armoured: 3rd Panzer (Stumpff, 266 tanks), 4th Panzer (von Radlmeier, 314 tanks) and 9th Panzer (von Hubicki, 153 tanks).

A third force, Army Group C commanded by von Leeb, was a purely infantry force of 19 divisions that was tasked with screening the Maginot Line and making feinting attacks to keep the forts' crews occupied.

Waiting game – the BEF prepare a roadbock

The narrow front was dictated by the geography of the Ardennes rather than some intentional 'deep thrust' ideology. Perhaps the most similar armoured operations to the 1940 attack were the 1944 assault of three British armoured divisions on the narrow front out of the Normandy bridgehead and the German Ardennes offensive in the same year.

It is noteworthy that neither of those attacks broke through the defender's lines because they ran into massed mobile defences. Both offensives bogged down in attritional blood baths with substantial tank losses on all sides. The difference was that in 1944 the Allies could absorb the losses while the Panzerwaffe could not.

It is therefore entirely rational that the Manstein plan aroused horror in the German military. Halder, Chief of the General Staff, initially opposed the plan and only finally backed it because he considered Germany's strategic position to be hopeless and so they might as well try a wild card as they had absolutely nothing to lose. For his pains he was nicknamed "Gravedigger of the Panzer force" by his peers.

Bridge players will be familiar with Halder's gambit: if there is only one distribution of cards among your opponents that will allow you to win, assume that distribution is in play no matter how unlikely it is, as any other choice guarantees you lose.

A Belgian column marches under the setting sun

By any reasonable standard the *sichelschnitt* should have failed and it would have failed if the French generals hadn't almost connived its success by making the worst choices possible. Briefly, they sent all their mobile reserve north into the jaws of the trap. Remaining units to the south actually retreated away from the neck of the pincer to 'Reinforce Paris and the Maginot Line'.

But even as the German army pivoted to the south to capture Paris and crush France, the British army slipped away across the channel, something that was to have great strategic significance for the future. Astonishingly, it transpired that no-one in the German military or political establishment had given the slightest transient whisper of a thought to what to do about Great Britain if the attack on France succeeded against the odds.

In the long run *Fall Gelb* had a pernicious effect on German thinking. The generals began to believe their own propaganda about Blitzkrieg. Panzer divisions became magic wands that could overcome whole nations with a single wave. In the invasion of the Soviet Union, the Panzer divisions won all the border battles causing immense Soviet losses. Halder concluded that the Russian campaign had been 'won in the space of two weeks'.

German Heer grenade launcher

France's army was commanded by General Maurice Gamelin, a 68 year old intellectual and veteran of World War I devoted to fine culture, philosophy and the history of art. He located his HQ conveniently near Paris in the elegant surroundings of the Chateau de Vincennes. In charge of the armies of north-eastern France was General A L Georges, whose own HQ was some 35 miles from that of Gamelin; not that he spent much time there preferring to use his home – some 12 miles further – as a personal command post. Gamelin distrusted radio communication to such an extent that there was no radio and no teleprinter at the Chateau de Vincennes. Instead, Gamelin relied upon dispatch riders to take messages to and fro, or simply drove over to speak to Georges in person. When asked how long it might take to get a message to the front, Gamelin was apparently content to reply "about 48 hours".

But the Soviet Union enjoyed three key properties that France lacked: (i) vast territory covered by rotten communications; (ii) immense resources in raw materials and people; (iii) tight political control and a unified will to win. The German high command had not given any consideration to how these strategic advantages could be nullified.

In a way the battle of France was one of Fuller's 'decisive battles' but not quite in the way he envisaged. The outcome demonstrated that in the long run Hitler could not win the war, no matter how tactically 'decisive' was any particular victory.

THE BATTLE OF FRANCE CAMPAIGN

If Poland, Denmark and Norway were the appetizer then the battle for France was the main course. Players may fight each scenario independently as takes their fancy, but equally they may string some or all of them together in a campaign.

Between the *Fall Gelb* and *Fall Rot* sections, there are ten scenarios in all: two French tanks attack scenarios, Orp and Stonne; two British tanks attack scenarios, Arras and Saint-Valey-sur-Somme; and two German Panzer attack scenarios, Cassel against the British and finally a Panzer attack against a fortified French village 'Hedgehog'. Special scenarios include a German airborne attack on a Belgian fort, a twin linked scenario featuring an assault on the Maginot Line and finally an urban conflict scenario between French and Italian troops.

The campaign cannot change history – France will still fall – but the challenge for players is to do better than their historical predecessors. At the end of each scenario Campaign Points are awarded for achieving objectives. These may be drawn from winning standard victory points or they may replace VPs altogether. See each scenario's Victory section.

WINNING THE BATTLE OF FRANCE CAMPAIGN

So you have fought your way through all ten scenarios, or at least a goodly number? I guess you want to know who won.

Total up all the campaign points and work out the difference between the two players. Then consult the table below to work out how the player with the largest number of points has done.

Points Difference	Result
0–3	Draw

3–5	Advantage high point player
5–10	Tactical victory
11+	Strategic victory

TIMELINE

1940

February: Manstein plan developed and adopted by Germany

March: France adopts Gamelin's Dyle-Breda line plan

9 May: German attack opens

10 May: Capture of Belgian forts at Eban Emael

12 May: Major tank battles near Hannut

12 May: Rommel crosses the River Meuse

14 May: Netherlands capitulates

15 May: Battle of Stonne

15 May: Reynaud informs Churchill France is defeated

17 May: Guderian ordered to pause his advance

18 May: Rommel takes Cambrai without a fight

19 May: De Gaulle's attack towards Crécy fails

19 May: Gort warns London to plan the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force

20 May: Two understrength British Territorial 'training' Divisions, the 12th Eastern (Surrey, Kent & Sussex) and the 23rd Northumbrian (Durham, Yorkshire & Tyneside) are annihilated trying to halt the

Panzer divisions
20 May: Detachment of 2nd Panzer reaches the sea at Noyelles
21 May: British armour attacks 7th Panzer near Arras without air or French support
22 May: Guderian attacks Channel ports but is repulsed by British troops
22 May: French attack with a single reinforced regiment north towards Cambrai stalls
23 May: Gort decides to save the BEF and withdraws to the Haute Deule Canal
24 May: Panzer divisions ordered to halt on the Aa Canal line and leave the *Luftwaffe* to destroy the BEF
26 May: French 1st Army makes a heroic stand on the Dunkirk perimeter
27 May: BEF evacuation starts
27 May: Allied forces attack the Abbeville Bridgehead
27 May: Panzers advance on Dunkirk
27 May: Belgium capitulates
28 May: Dunkirk evacuation reinforced by the ‘little ships’
29 May: French evacuation from Dunkirk starts
29 May: Panzer divisions withdrawn from battle for refurbishment
4 June: The last troops are withdrawn from Dunkirk

SCENARIO 7: EBEN EMAEL

Fort Eben Emael consisted of a dispersed system of ferro-concrete gun emplacements, bunkers, pillboxes and blockhouses at ground level connected by underground tunnels. The site was roughly a delta wing shape on a low hill, with the nose pointing north. The deep cutting of the Albert Canal protected the east flank while a water-fillable anti-tank ditch ran along the west. Another anti-tank ditch protected the southern base of the delta.

Eben Emael was part of a four-fort blocking position between Liège and Maastricht. Its 120mm and 75mm artillery could bombard a considerable area of the flat land to the east, therefore it was highly desirable for the German military to take it out in a *coup de main* to clear the way into Belgium.

The fort had, with hindsight, one glaring weakness. Its flat extended surface was not protected with anti-landing stakes or wire and possessed little in the way of anti-aircraft weapons. Accordingly, the Germans determined to attempt an airborne assault by Fallschirmjäger.

The weapon chosen was the DFS 230 nine-man (plus pilot) light assault glider specially equipped for the mission with dig-in brakes to reduce the landing distance. Also central to the attack was the development of Hohllldungwaffen, or shaped charge demolition explosives to crack the fortifications. These came in a light one-man 12.5kg bomb and a two-man heavy 50kg charge.

The Belgian defenders consisted primarily of artillerymen and logistic personnel so were ill-trained or equipped to fight an infantry battle against the elite German paras.

A Belgian patrol leaves their château headquarters

FORCES

The Belgian defenders follow the rules for the Defenders of Eben Emael Reinforced Platoon (see here).

The German force is drawn from the Fallschirmjäger Reinforced Platoon selector (see here).

SET-UP

The scenario recreates the attack of the German airborne troops on the fortifications within the perimeter defences of Fort Eben Emael, best played on a four by four foot area. Fortifications crews never leave their bunkers, and the Belgian player will have to keep track of crew losses if they are not represented by models.

The Belgian player places the fortifications around the playing area before the game, so that they are at least 12” from the table edge, and otherwise spacing them as evenly as possible. The rest of the playing area should be flat without trees or bushes.

All Belgian troops are in reserve, and so are all of the German forces.

Belgian reserves emerge onto the table through any exit hatch set in an undestroyed fortification with at least one original crew member alive (the fortifications were all linked by underground tunnels). Belgian troops may not re-enter a fortification once deployed.

German reserves enter the table from any point along any table edge they like, as they make their way towards the fortifications from their gliders that landed in the proximity.

OBJECTIVE

The German player must destroy as many fortifications as possible or at least kill the crews. He receives three victory points for each fortifications destroyed and one point for killing all the crew in an undestroyed fortification. The Belgian player receives one point for each undestroyed fortification with at least one crew member at the end of the game and three points for an undestroyed fortification with ALL of the original crew alive.

GAME DURATION

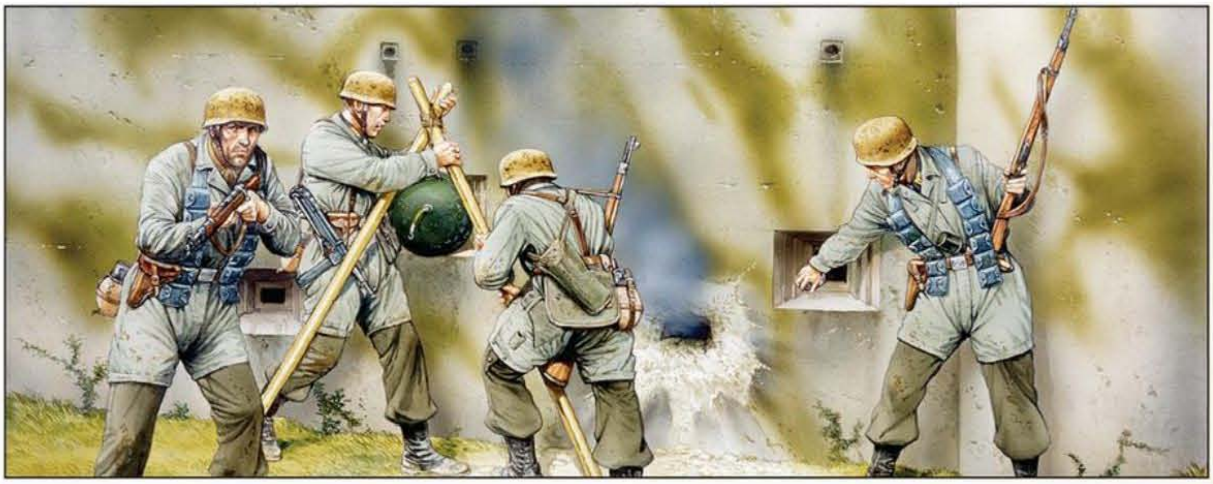
Keep a count of how many turns have elapsed as the game is played. At the end of Turn 6 roll a die. On a result of 1, 2 or 3 the game ends. Otherwise play for one more turn.

VICTORY

Whoever has the most victory points by the end of the game wins, otherwise the game is a draw.

PLAYER NOTES

Neither player should lose track of the fact that victory in this game hinges solely on the survival or otherwise of the fortifications. Everything depends on the German player who has it all to do. He must be aggressive and go after the Belgian fortifications with Hohlldungwaffen. Flamethrowers are not to be despised: they won't destroy the fortifications but they are the best way to eliminate crews.



Sturmgruppe Granit at Eben Emael, by Peter Dennis © Osprey Publishing Ltd. Taken from Elite 136: World War II Airborne Warfare Tactics

SCENARIO 8: THE BATTLE OF ORP

The first great tank battle of World War II and the largest tank battle of the campaign, indeed the greatest tank battle in history up to that point (with around 1,500 AFVs involved), took place near Hannut in Belgium. The 2nd and 3rd DLMs fought the 3rd and 4th Panzer Divisions from 12 to 14 May 1940.

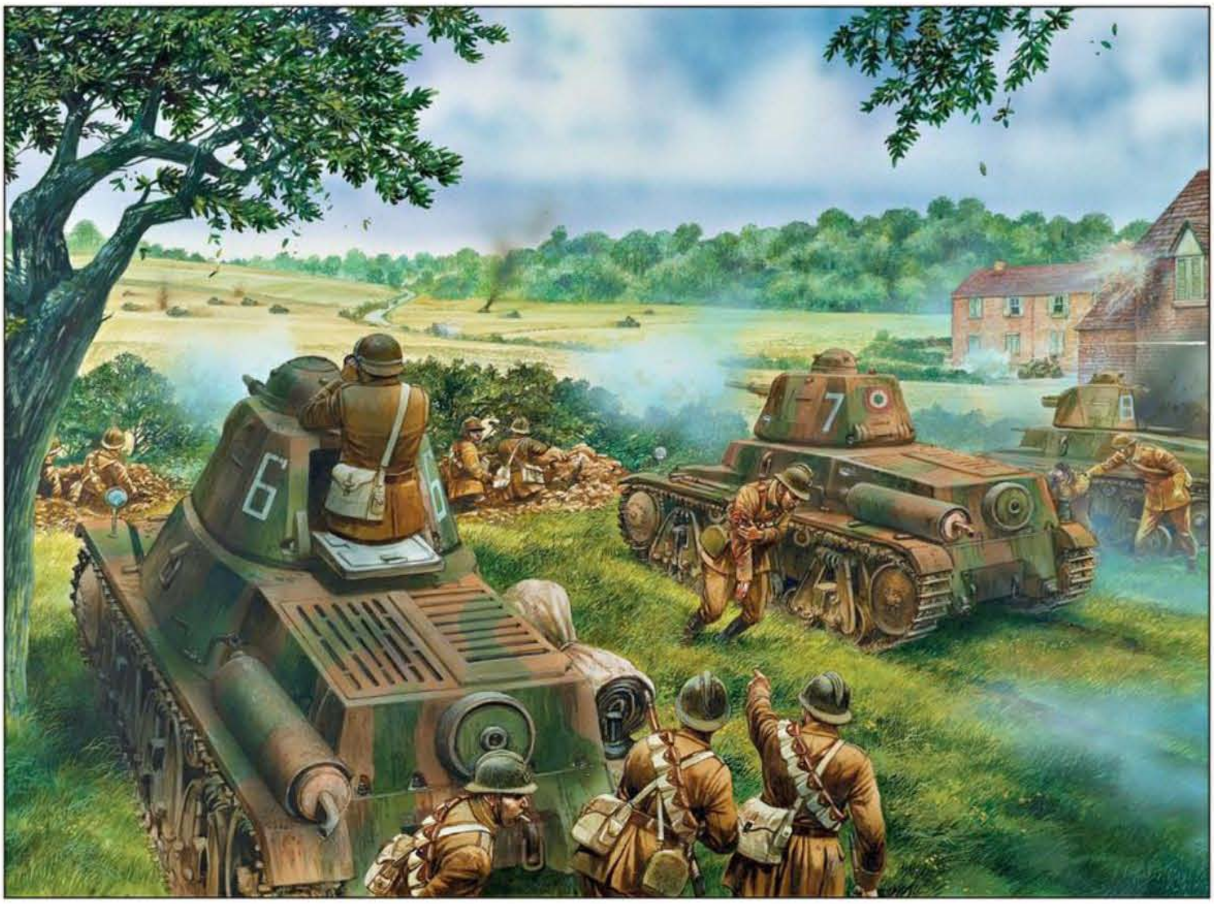
Somua S35

The French objective was to fight a two-day delaying action to enable slow-moving reinforcements to arrive before falling back on the Gembloux Gap between the rivers Dyle and Meuse.

The German intention was to suck in and tie up as much of the French armour on the secondary northern front for as long as possible and degrade it (although the latter was of secondary importance).

The main tank clash was fought at Orp, largely between 3rd Panzer and the 3rd DLM on the afternoon of 13 May. The battle started with infiltration by German reconnaissance forces, armoured cars and motorbike infantry, followed by a hasty attack by German armour on French strongpoints defended by infantry and Hotchkiss tanks using artillery and air assets. Allied air intervention was ineffectual and eventually withdrawn.

3rd Panzer's assault was initially successful, but a French counterattack by Hotchkiss reinforcements drove back the German armour. Emboldened, the Cuirassiers launched a regiment of Somua S35 medium tanks to meet the Panzers head on. Using their experience and superior command control, 3rd Panzer's tanks moved out to the flanks and ambushed the French column.



The tank battle at Hannut, by Peter Dennis © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Campaign 265: Fall Gelb 1940 (2).

The battles of the Gembloux Gap are difficult to evaluate. The French disabled about 160 German tanks for the loss of 91 *Hotchkiss H35* and 30

Somua S35 tanks destroyed or captured. In that sense the French army won. However, the Germans controlled the field after the battle. They recovered and eventually repaired or rebuilt many of their knocked-out tanks so just 49 were write-offs.

The Somua S35 proved to be a formidable vehicle and the equal of the Panzer III and IV in many ways. The Panzer divisions were outnumbered and outmatched on paper, but superior German tactics and command control nullified French advantages to give the Panzers ultimate victory.

Strategically, the German army had achieved its aim of tying down French cavalry in the north giving the main Panzer thrust in the south an open goal. However, despite being mauled, the French armoured cavalry was neither destroyed nor demoralised. It fought on with grim determination occupying the attention of Panzer divisions that would otherwise have overrun Dunkirk. The German failure to trap the British army in France was one of the two great strategic failures that meant Germany could not win World War II – the failure before Moscow being the second – even if it did not guarantee defeat.

The French advance through town, looking for the enemy

FORCES

The French player chooses forces from the French DLM selector (see here) and the German from the 1940 Panzer Division selector (see here). 3rd Panzer was equipped with an even distribution of German tank types so the player may select tanks freely from appropriate 1940 marks of Panzer I, II, III or IV within the limitations of the list.

THE BATTLE

Use ‘Scenario 2: Maximum Attrition’ from the *Bolt Action* rulebook.

The battleground consisted of a plateau with occasional woods, a dense road network, extended localities and a few isolated large farms. Small streams flowed across the region, within two or three metre deep, rock cuts offering good cover for would-be infiltrators, but there were many crossing points fordable by tracked vehicles.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

A player receives one Campaign Point for winning the scenario by two to five victory points and three Campaign Points if he wins by six or more victory points. Both players get a Campaign Point for a draw. A player receives a bonus of two Campaign Points if he destroys all his opponent's tracked vehicles and a bonus of three Campaign Points if he completely destroys his opponent's forces.

PLAYER NOTES

This game is all about destruction, especially destruction of your opponent's armoured force. The armies are evenly balanced with the Panzers having the advantage of experience and the French having the advantage of very thick armour. Victory will go to the tactically skilled or the lucky, but, most of all, victory will go to the most aggressive. Panzer divisions and DLM were designed to attack, so get stuck in.

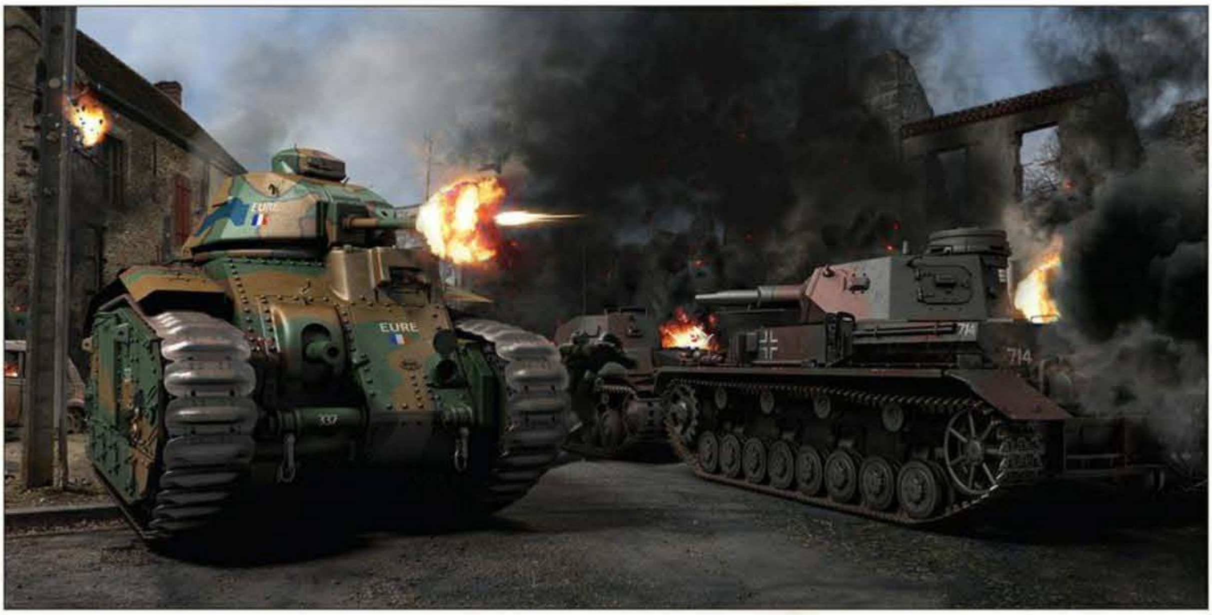
SCENARIO 9: THE BATTLE OF STONNE

Perhaps the key moment in the battle of France, the pivot on which the campaign turned, was the battle of Sedan on the River Meuse. Once beyond Sedan, the Panzer divisions had a clear run to the English Channel and the French army knew that. In theory Sedan was easily defendable, but the French fortifications were very weak, consisting of half-finished bunkers manned by a single Category B division. They hadn't laid a single mine.

The French army broke and fled leaving the Germans free to capture Sedan and its valuable bridges intact.

1st and 2nd Panzer pressed on to the west, reaching the Channel in five days. 10th Panzer and the Gross Deutschland motorised infantry were left to defend the vital crossing. Large French forces with tanks were spotted massing on the Stonne plateau to the south west of Sedan so the German forces decided to mount a pre-emptive attack. At the village of Stonne on 15 May they ran smack into the 3rd DCR supported by the 3rd DIM (motorised infantry).

3rd DCR was not in great shape. Some of its light tanks had been lost in the Norwegian campaign and a number of its Char B1 *bis* heavy tanks had broken down on the march. Nevertheless, they arrived on 14 May and refuelled so were ready for battle the next day.



Char B1 bis at Stonne, by Richard Chasemore © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Duel 33: Panzer IV vs Char B1 bis.

The clash between 3rd DCR and 10th Panzer turned into one of the most vicious and costly actions of the campaign and produced the first allied tank ace, Capitaine Pierre Billotte. The armoured units of both sides were pulled out of Stonne on the evening of 16 May after 33 French tanks and 25 German had been destroyed.

The fighting continued between infantry units. Stonne changed hands 17 times before the Germans secured the village. Strategically, it was a clear German victory as 3rd DCR never did attack Sedan, let alone capture it.

Char B1

FORCES

Use the French DCR selector (see here) for French forces and the 1940 Panzer Division selector (see here) for the German, employing a 10th Panzer tank mix. The Germans used a higher proportion of Panzer IVs at Stonne to counter the French heavy tanks, so the German player may happily ignore the recommended ratio for 10th Panzer.

SET-UP

Place a small village in the middle of the table along a road that runs east–west to the centre of each narrow table edge. A second road runs from a T junction in the middle of the village to the centre of the southern broad table edge.

The terrain is flat with clumps of trees and low vegetation. The roads are narrow and slightly sunken with low hedges.

The French army enters the table from the western table edge or the southern edge, on the road or to its west. The German army enters from the eastern table edge. Players should divide their armies into a First wave and a Reserve force with at least one unit in each.

The French player may use Capitaine Billotte's Char B1 *bis*.

OBJECTIVE

There are two objectives: (i) to capture the village and (ii) to destroy enemy units.

FIRST TURN

On Turn 1 both players bring their First wave onto the table using an advance or run order; no Morale test is required, not even for French tanks with a one man turret! Reserves come on as normal.

GAME DURATION

At the end of Turn 6 roll a die. On a result of 1 or 2 the game ends, otherwise it continues for another turn. At the end of Turn 7 roll a die. On a 1 to 4 the game ends, otherwise it continues until Turn 8, after which it ends.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

The village is captured by the player who has at least a unit within 6” of the exact mid-point of the T junction at the end of the game without an enemy unit being within 6” of that point. Any other result is a draw and the players get one Campaign Point each. A player gets three Campaign Points for a win, with a bonus of one Campaign Points if there is no enemy unit within 18” of the centre of the T.

The player who destroys more enemy units than he loses receives one bonus Campaign Point, or two bonus points if he destroys five or more enemy units than he loses.

PLAYER NOTES

This game is likely to come down to a duel between the heavy armour (Char Bs versus Panzer IIIs and IVs) with the light stuff (Panzer Is and IIs versus R35s and H35s) acting as flank guards to keep off enemy infantry. The French have the advantage of thick armour but the German AFVs are more flexible. German anti-tank weapons will have great difficult penetrating the French tanks, but pour the fire in anyway; try to render them useless and vulnerable to close assault with pin markers.

LEGENDS OF FRANCE

CAPITAINE PIERRE BILLOTTE

Billotte was commander of the Char B1 *bis* heavy tank *Eure* during the Battle of Stonne. *Eure* was part of an attack by two companies totalling 14 tanks, which attacked Stonne on the morning of 16 May supported by H39 light tanks. Billotte led the attack by advancing into the village from the west along the main street. He encountered a column of Panzer IIs supported by a few Panzer IIIs and IVs. He simultaneously engaged the lead tank with his 75mm and the rear tank with his turret gun, trapping the other vehicles. He then proceeded methodically down the street knocking out each Panzer in turn in the trapped column. Exiting the village from the east he bumped into another group of Panzers and destroyed those in turn before proceeding down the road and eliminating two anti-tank guns. That day, he claimed 13 Panzers in all.

Billotte's Char B1 *bis* is described in the *Tank Battles* supplement, page 49. Adjust the points if you decide to use the Char B1's lack of traverse rule. Note that the optional No Turret Hatch rule does not apply to Billotte's tank. In addition his tank may be a command vehicle for +10pts.

The French counter-attack

SCENARIO 10: FRANKFORCE AT ARRAS

The British 1st Army Tank Brigade has been immortalised by the battle of Arras where it clashed with the 7th Panzer Division and the SS Division Totenkopf. The brigade was short of tanks having motored over 100 miles on its tracks with the inevitable breakdowns.

The Arras attack was the only major British attack in the battle of France and was supposed to be conducted by two divisions. It was organised into two battle groups, each with a battalion of tanks and motorised infantry supported by towed artillery. The western group was based around the 7th Royal Tank Regiment and the 8th Durham Light Infantry, and the eastern group around the 4th RTR and 6th DLI. There was no reconnaissance or air support available and the tanks tended to become detached from their infantry, a pernicious British habit of the Blitzkrieg era. The battlegroup was named Frankforce after its commander, Major-General Harold Franklyn.

The eastern battle group overran Totenkopf units including 37mm light anti-tank guns towed by Hanomag half-tracks. The legend of the Matilda II was born in this battle with one Matilda II shrugging off 14 anti-tank hits. Stukas did rather better by destroying two Matilda Is from the air.

The western group wreaked havoc amongst 7th Panzer causing much destruction including enemy tanks. Eventually their progress was halted by a heavy artillery *pakfront* including 88mm flak guns organised by Rommel himself. A German armoured counter attack was stopped by infantry strongpoints in villages with anti-tank artillery.

FORCES

British units should be selected from the British 1st Army Tank Brigade selector (see here) and German from the 1940 Panzer Division selector (see here), with tank choices tailored to suit 7th Panzer. In addition, the German player may take Rommel as an officer, but he must start the game in reserve.

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 2: Maximum Attrition' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook with the British as the attackers. The first wave of both Germans and British must be tanks (i.e. any fully tracked vehicles for the purpose of this scenario), without any towed artillery or transported infantry.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

Keep track of destroyed enemy units. The player who destroys the highest number of enemy units wins. Otherwise it is a draw. Players receive one Campaign Point for a draw, three for winning by a margin of three or more enemy units, and six Campaign Points for winning by a margin of six or more enemy units.

PLAYER NOTES

This is a straightforward demolition derby. The British seem to have had no particular geographic objective in mind. Frankforce was too weak and unsupported to advance far. Their aim seems to have been more reconnaissance in force with the vague hope of disrupting the supply corridor for the Panzer spearhead. The Germans were under the impression that they were the targets of a serious assault by something resembling a corps and fought like tigers, which gives an indication of the impact of a handful of decent British infantry tanks.

The German problem will be the usual one of handling Allied heavier tanks with their thick armour. Only heavy howitzers and 88mm flak guns will stop them. The German player should try to suppress the British armour by pinning them in the early turns using the better mobility of the Panzers until big guns can deliver the *coup de grâce*.

The British player should make hay while the sun shines and shoot up as many German vehicles as possible before their heavy guns arrive from reserve. When they do, the British player should try to put in a combined attack with his infantry in support.

LEGENDS OF GERMANY

ERWIN ROMMEL (AT ARRAS)

Erwin Rommel, later be known as the *Wüstenfuchs* – The Desert Fox – is best known for his exploits as the commander of the Deutsches Afrika Korps and later as the general responsible for the defence of the Atlantic coast of Europe against the expected Allied invasion. In 1940 he was commander of 7th Panzer, nicknamed the Ghost Division because it advanced so fast and so far that no one ever knew quite where it was: especially not the German command.

At Arras, Rommel's main contribution was to steady the line when Frankforce broke the German armour and their anti-tank defences proved inadequate. One of Frankforce's columns was stopped by 105mm howitzers and the other by 88mm flak guns; reputedly Rommel and his aide went from gun to gun giving fire directions.

Rommel's characteristics below reflect his role in the battle of Arras.

Cost: 180pts (Veteran)

Team: 1 officer and up to 2 other men

Weapons: Submachine gun, pistol or rifle as depicted on the models.

Options:

- Rommel may be accompanied by up to 2 men at a cost of +13pts per man (Veteran)

Special Rules:

- Rommel's Morale bonus is +4.
- Anti-tank specialist: Any anti-tank gun artillery unit within 6" of Rommel may reroll their rolls to hit when firing against tanks (i.e. any fully tracked vehicles for the purpose of this rule).

SCENARIO 11: CRUISER TANKS ATTACK

On 19 May, Gamelin was sacked and replaced by Maxime Weygand, who proved if anything even more indolent than his predecessor. On the morning of 26 May Weygand gave the order for an attack on the German salient at Abbeville. British 1st Armoured Division was tasked with spearheading the attack, a role for which it was unsuited, apparently because the French were under the misconception that it consisted of heavy infantry tanks. The French army were supposed to support the British armour with infantry and artillery, but this proved problematical. The area was initially held by 2nd Panzer, but the German line had been reinforced by the 2nd Motorised Infantry Division well before the attack. Eventually the 57th Infantry Division was rotated into the line.

The battle commenced on the morning of 27 May with little prior reconnaissance. The 2nd Armoured Brigade on the right flank ran straight into dug in German anti-tank defences. As the tanks were unsupported by French infantry or artillery, the units suffered heavy casualties for little gain.

On the left, 3rd Armoured Brigade made much better progress, punching through the German defences to reach the high ground overlooking St Valery sur Somme on the Baie de Somme, but the French infantry failed to follow up the offensive. Unable to hold the ground without support, 3rd Armoured fell back when they learned the French infantry were digging in well to the rear.

In this futile and badly organised attack, 1st Armoured Division lost 65 vehicles in combat and 55 due to breakdowns. Some were recovered, but spares were in short supply so many never fought again.

FORCES

British units should be selected from the British 1st Armoured Division selector (see here). Von Manstein's memoirs suggest that the Abbeville bridgehead was held by the 2nd Motorised Infantry Division on 27 May, so use the German Motorised Infantry Reinforced Platoon selector (see here) for the German force.

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 3: Point Defence' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook with the British as the attackers.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

Each objective is worth one Campaign Point. A further three bonus Campaign Points are awarded to a player who holds all three objectives.

PLAYER NOTES

The German player faces the problem that his units are relatively immobile and he is about to receive a mechanised attack. The watchword is dig in and use cover. Remember, this scenario allows access to the Hidden set-up rules (page 117, *Bolt Action* rulebook): use them.

Give German infantry anti-tank grenades. They are going to need them.

Siting the German heavy weapons with armour penetration capability is of paramount importance. Make sure they are positioned to ambush the British armour.

The British player has different challenges. His tanks have paper-thin armour and were never designed for this sort of frontal attack. The best solution is a combined arms attack where the tanks and infantry cover each other. But then there is the problem of the 'sticky' British infantry.

Neither player should lose sight of the fact that victory depends on capturing objectives. Killing enemy units is just a means to this end. It is often just as effective to neutralise them with pinning… except for those sitting on the objectives, of course.

For fun, try playing the game with 2nd Panzer as the defenders. It is interesting to see whether they fare better than an infantry-heavy force in defence.

A10 Cruiser Tank Mk II

ADDITIONAL UNITS

BELGIAN FORTIFICATIONS

The Bunker Rules on page 104 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook are in effect.

COMMAND CUPOLA – 100PTS

This is an unarmed armoured dome used as an observation point for the fort's long range artillery. It includes a single spotter and has no entry above ground, so it cannot be assaulted other than with Hohlldung-waffen. As long as all command cupolas are intact, the Belgian units inside all bunkers and fortifications benefit from a +1 Morale bonus, in addition, all artillery units in fortifications can draw line of sight for indirect fire from the cupola's observation slit, as if they had a spotter in the cupola.

LIGHT BLOCK – 90PTS

A small bunker that includes a MMG team, with a firing port on one side and an exit hatch on the opposite side. It can only be used by units of up to three men.

GUN BLOCK – 90PTS

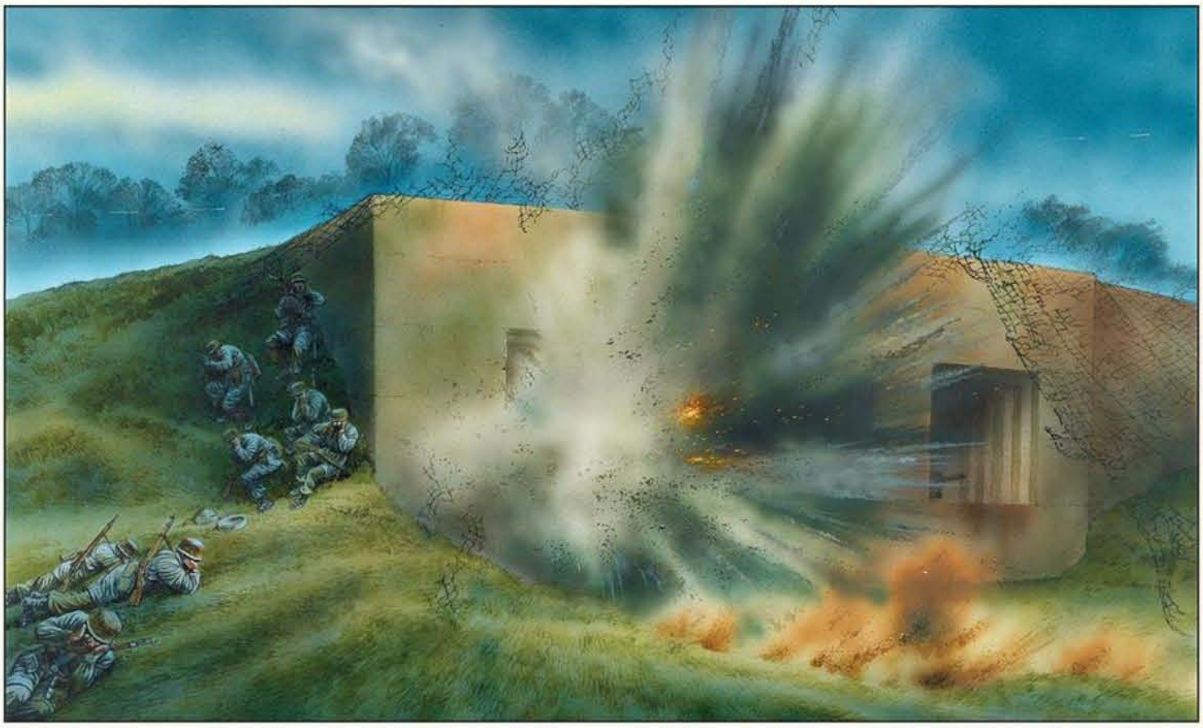
A small bunker that includes a light howitzer and crew, with a firing port on one side and an exit hatch on the opposite side. It can only be used by units of up to three men.

HEAVY GUN BLOCK – 140PTS

This bunker is equipped with a heavy howitzer in a rotating turret (cancelling the Fixed rule, so that the howitzer can be fired in a 360 degree arc), including a crew of five men. The main block has an exit hatch. It can only be used by units of up to five men.

FAKE CUPOLA – oPTS

A dummy command cupola used to confuse the enemy. A fake cupola can be deployed by the Belgian player for free for each real cupola bought. It should look identical to a real dome so that the German player cannot tell them apart until the end of the game when its true identity is revealed, or when all real command cupolas are destroyed. It has no crew.



The assault on the Maastricht 2 emplacement, by Peter Dennis © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Raid 38: The Fall of Eben Emael.

GERMAN LIGHT AND HEAVY HOHLLDUNGWAFFEN

These shaped charge demolition explosives were used to smash fortifications. The section (or team in the case of the heavy charge) carrying Hohlldungwaffen must start the turn adjacent to the target and must be given a 'Fire' order to detonate the charge. A Hohlldungwaffen may only be used once. A section possessing Hohlldungwaffen may detonate any number of them in any one turn at the discretion of the German player but when they're gone, they're gone.

A light Hohlldungwaffen detonated against a fortification kills the crew on a die roll of 5 and, in addition, destroys the fortification on a 6. A Heavy Hohlldungwaffen kills a bunker crew on a 3+ and in addition destroys the structure on a 5+.

Light Hohlldungwaffen can be given to any eligible figure (see the Fallschirmjäger selector here) for +3pts per man. Heavy Hohlldungwaffen are treated as follows:

HEAVY HOHLLDUNGWAFFEN TEAM

This weapon was constructed in two sections and carried broken down by a two-man team.

Cost: 50pts (Veteran)
Team: 2 men
Weapons: submachineguns, one Heavy Hohlldungwaffen
Special Rules:

- After the Hohlldungwaffen is used, the squad continues to fight as normal.

FRENCH UNITS

FRENCH TANK OPTIONAL RULES

- **No turret hatch:** French tanks (other than the AMR 33 & 35 and AMC 35) lacked a turret top hatch. It is notoriously difficult to see out of a buttoned down tank so it was common practice in World War II for tank commanders to stick their heads out of the hatch even in the combat zone. In tank battles the first shot to hit was likely to be decisive so tank commanders usually considered exposing their heads less risky than the alternative. German tankers were astonished how close they could get to French tanks without being seen. French tanks should be penalised by the player having to make an observation test before firing at any target outside point blank range (6"). The player must roll a 3+ to acquire the target. If the test is failed, the tank cannot fire for that turn. This rule should be considered optional and can only be employed if both players agree as it severely hobbles French tanks and changes the game balance: *you have been warned*. If you use this rule reduce the cost of French tanks that it affects by 20%, rounding fractions downwards, to restore some game balance.

"A formidable shock. The turret shakes, struck at the base. The traversing gear is jammed. The turret won't move any more. I struggle furiously with it, strike the gear, and just at that moment when I am despairing, unjam it. The turret moves. I fire. Bang! A heavy shell strikes obliquely at the top of my turret, which glows red." – Capitaine Jean-Charles Idée, 4th DCR

- **Char B1 Lack of Traverse:** The Char B and variants lacked a traverse mechanism for the main gun in the hull. Accordingly, an immobile Char B cannot fire its hull howitzer. Reduce the cost of this tank by 10pts.

AMD PANHARD 178 COMMAND VEHICLE

One in 12 Panhard 178 armoured cars were intended for deep reconnaissance and command, but only 24 were actually built. They were disarmed and the turret fixed so they could be fitted with powerful long range radios and short range command radios.

Cost: 68pts (Inexperienced), 85pts (Regular), 102pts (Veteran)

Weapons: None

Damage Value: 7+ (armoured car)

Special Rules:

•Recce

•Command Vehicle

AMD Panhard 178

THEATRE SELECTORS

DEFENDERS OF EBEN EMAEL

The Belgian fortification in this selector can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Gelb*, starting on here, while the troops are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies* book.

DEFENDERS OF EBEN EMAEL REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant
2 Inexperienced infantry squads

plus:

Headquarters
0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Medic

Infantry
0–3 Inexperienced Belgian infantry squads
0–1 MMG Team (Inexperienced)

SPECIAL RULES

- Defensive Positions: The Belgian player **must** spend half his points on fortifications. He must buy one of each type before buying more.
- Only the Communication Breakdown army special rule is in effect, as described on page 41 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement.

A Belgian 47mm AT gun sights the onrushing Panzers

FRENCH DLM

DLM stands for *Division Légère Mécanique* ('Light Mechanised Division'). These were the most powerful units in the French Army, 'light' meaning fast rather than weak. By February 1940, France had three DLMs organised into a Cavalry Corps. 1st and 2nd DLM were regular troops while 3rd DLM was hastily activated in 1940 from reservists, many of whom had little or no training in tanks.

The French cavalry were initially mechanised with less than satisfactory half-tracks, but these were upgraded to fully tracked light vehicles in the 1930s, initially with the AMR 33 and later the improved AMR 35. These units were tasked with reconnaissance, which is presumably why they had one of the few French vehicles equipped with turret top hatches.

One of the mission tasks intended for the mechanised cavalry was to fight other tanks and the Somua S35 was the best tank for that mission. Unfortunately, these tanks still lacked a turret top hatch, and there were never enough S35s to go round, so the cavalry were saddled with the Hotchkiss H35 as a stopgap. This two-man light tank had already been rejected by the infantry and was wholly unsuitable for cavalry operations as envisioned, not least because there was not room for radios in the small vehicles.

A DLM had the following sub-units: A *Régiment de Cuirassiers* and a *Régiment de Dragons*, each consisting of 43 Hotchkiss H35s and 44 Somua S35 tanks; a *Régiment de Découverte* (Reconnaissance) with 40 Panhard 178 armoured cars; and a *Régiment de Dragons Portés* (Mechanised Cavalry) with 67 AMR 33/35 armoured cars. 3rd DLM was unusual in that its reconnaissance regiment was equipped with 22 Hotchkiss H35 and 47 Hotchkiss H39 tanks.

All units in this selector can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Gelb*, starting on here, while the troops are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies* book.

DLM ARMOURED PLATOON

1 Somua S35 or Hotchkiss H39 (with upgraded SA38 light anti-tank gun), with the Command Vehicle special rule at +25pts, or a Panhard 178 command vehicle
2 Tanks from: Somua S35, Hotchkiss H35

plus:

Headquarters
0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Medic
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)

Infantry
0–3 Infantry section: Dragons Portes/Chasseurs Portes infantry sections
0–1 Motorbike section
0–1 MMG team
0–1 Mortar team: 60mm light mortar, 81mm medium mortar

Artillery

0–1 Artillery unit from:
Field gun: 75mm 1897 light howitzer, 105mm 1936 medium howitzer
Anti-tank gun: 47mm SA 37 medium anti-tank gun
Anti-aircraft gun: 25mm Hotchkiss 1939 light AA gun

Armoured Car

0–1 armoured cars: AMD Panhard 178, AMR 33/35

Transport and Tows

The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: Lorraine 38, Laffly S20 TL, Unic P107 half-track. It **must** also include a tow for the artillery piece, if chosen, from: Unic P107 half-track, Laffly S15/V15.

SPECIAL RULES

- The Communication Breakdown, Forward Artillery Doctrine and Hurriedly Conscripted Reserves army special rules are in effect, as described on pages 10–11 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement.
- Units are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies*, but **must** be purchased as either Regular or Inexperienced.

A French patrol looking for signs of their German foe

FRENCH DCR

DCR stands for *Division Cuirassée de Réserve* ('Reserve Armoured Division'). These were heavy armoured units designed to support infantry attacks and hence were organisationally part of the infantry arm.

The infantry tank arm aimed to have an infantry tank and a heavy breakthrough tank, the *char de rupture,* which would replace the impractical Char 2C. The first vehicles adopted for the infantry tank role were the unsuccessful Char D1 and D2. Eventually the French army decided on the inexpensive Renault R35 light two-man tank and its derivatives as the primary infantry support vehicle. The FCM was a better design but was too expensive for mass production.

The replacement breakthrough tank was the Char B. The Char B is one of those weapon systems that looks good on the wargames table, but was a failure in practice. It was intended as an armoured assault artillery piece, but it was built on too narrow a hull for the 75mm howitzer in the bow, which therefore was fixed with no traverse system unlike the analogous American M3 Lee/Grant. So the Char B's main gun could only be aimed by rotating the whole vehicle using a complicated and unreliable precision steering system. To add to the Heath Robinson aspect it was decided to add a one-man turret to the roof to improve the anti-tank capability.

Reserve armoured divisions were intended to conform to the ‘methodical battle’ concept where combat would occur at a World War I tempo so one-man turrets on the tanks were considered a reasonable measure to cut costs. Similarly radios were considered an unnecessary luxury.

The 1st and 2nd DCR were formed in January 1940, the 3rd in March 1940 and the 4th in May 1940, so had little experience of functioning as a division.

A DCR had the following subunits: Two *Bataillons de Chars de Combat* each with 31 Char B1 *bis* heavy tanks; two *Bataillons de Chars de Combat* each with 40 Hotchkiss H39 light tanks; and one *Bataillon de Chasseurs Portés* of motorised infantry. 3rd DCR lacked a motorcycle reconnaissance platoon. 4th DCR used a battalion of Char D2s manned by elite crews and Renault R35s instead of H39s.

All units in this selector can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Gelb*, starting on here, while the troops are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies* book.

DCR ARMOURED PLATOON

1 Char1 *bis*, Char D2, Renault R35 or Hotchkiss H39 (with upgraded SA38 light anti-tank gun), with the Command Vehicle special rule at +25pts
2 Tanks from: 1 Char1 *bis*, Char D2, Renault R35 or Hotchkiss H39

plus:

Headquarters
0–1 Captain or Major

0–1 Medic

0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)

Infantry

1–3 Infantry section: Dragons Portes/Chasseurs Portes infantry sections

0–1 Motorbike section

0–1 Machine gun team

0–1 Mortar team: 60mm light mortar, 81mm medium mortar

Artillery

0–1 Artillery unit from:

Field gun: 105mm 1936 medium howitzer

Anti-tank gun: 25mm SA 34 light anti-tank gun, 47mm SA 37 medium anti-tank gun

Anti-aircraft gun: 25mm light AA gun Hotchkiss 1939

Transport and Tows

The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: Lorraine 38, Laffly S20 TL, Laffly S15/V15, Unic P107 half-track

SPECIAL RULES

- The Communication Breakdown, Forward Artillery Doctrine and Hurriedly Conscripted Reserves army special rules are in effect, as described on pages 10–11 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement.

Lorraine 38L

BRITISH 1ST ARMY TANK BRIGADE

The brigade had 12 Mk VIB light tanks, 77 Matilda Is and 23 Matilda IIs. The Matilda I probably suffered disproportionally from breakdowns, so an ideal ratio of tanks for the army would be something like four Matilda Is to two Matilda IIs to one Mk VI.

All the units in this selector can be found in the *Armies of Great Britain* supplement.

BEF Vickers MMG team

BRITISH 1ST ARMY TANK BRIGADE ARMOURED PLATOON

1 Command Tank from: Matilda II, Matilda I, or Mk VIB to which you must give the Command Vehicle special rule (see page 95 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook)

2 Tanks from: Matilda II, Matilda I, or Mk VIB

plus:

Headquarters
0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Medic
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)

Infantry
1–3 Infantry sections: Early war Regular or Inexperienced infantry sections
0–1 Sniper team
0–1 Machine gun team
0–1 Mortar team: light or medium

Artillery
0–1 Artillery unit:
Field artillery: 25pdr light howitzer
Anti aircraft gun: 40mm heavy automatic cannon
Anti-tank gun: QF 2pdr light anti-tank gun

Tank
0–1 vehicle from: Matilda I, or Mk VIB

Transport and Tows
The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: Bren carrier, 15cwt, 30cwt, 3 ton trucks, utility cars and Quad tractors.

SPECIAL RULES

- Units may be Regular or Inexperienced.
- Baptism of Fire: The British units in the following selector are just as described in the *Armies of Great Britain* book. However, they **must** choose the Rapid Fire national characteristic and **cannot** be purchased as Veterans.

In addition, the following rules **replace** the *Bombardment* and *Artillery Support* army special rules.

- Resolute: British infantry were resolute in defence. If a British infantry or artillery unit that was treated as in cover when the enemy fired at it suffers enough casualties to cause a Morale check, the unit benefits from a +1 Morale modifier for the check.
- Sticky: British infantry and artillery tended to get separated from advancing armour. British infantry and artillery units must always take an Order test when given an advance or run order, even if the unit is not pinned.

BRITISH 1ST ARMOURED DIVISION

A British 1940 armoured division's combat units consisted of two armoured brigades of three regiments (note that the British term regiment in this context means a battalion from that regiment) and two motorised infantry regiments, each of four companies of three motor platoons and one scout platoon. Motorised sections within the companies were up to eight men strong and included both a Bren gun and a Boys anti-tank rifle. The scout platoon sections were mounted on armoured carriers. The motorised regiments lacked anti-tank guns or artillery larger than a light mortar.

The armoured regiments were supposed to be equipped with cruiser tanks, but when war broke out there were not enough to go around so light tanks filled out the ranks.

Divisional support units included: a regiment of Royal Horse Artillery consisting of two battalions of 12 25pdr howitzers; a light anti-aircraft regiment of two batteries of 12 towed 40mm automatic cannon; and an anti-tank regiment of two batteries of 12 towed QF 2pdr guns.

On paper the 1st was a powerful unit, fully able to take on a Panzer division. In practice the division was hopelessly compromised. It was not ready for deployment: for example, many of the tanks were lacking machine guns, which had to be fitted in France. The division was rushed into a collapsing situation and landed scattered at various ports. It never reformed into balanced formations.

The division included: the 2nd Armoured Brigade consisting of three regiments, the 2nd Dragoon Guards (Bays), 9th Queens Royal Lancers and the 10th Prince of Wales Own Royal Hussars; and the 3rd Armoured Brigade consisting of just two regiments, the 2nd and 5th Battalions, Royal Tank

Regiment. Tank strength consisted of 74 Mk VIB and 60 Mk VIC light tanks, and 24 A9, 31 A10, and 95 A13 cruisers.

- **12th Lancers:** This reconnaissance unit had 36 Morris CS9 Armoured Cars.
- **1st Army Tank Brigade:** The unit consisted of the 4th and 7th Battalions, Royal Tank Regiment. Tank strength consisted of 12 Mk VIB light tanks, 77 Matilda I light infantry tanks and 23 Matilda II heavy infantry tanks.
- **1st Armoured Reconnaissance Brigade**: The unit consisted of the 1st Battalion East Riding Yeomanry and the 1st Battalion Fife & Forfar Yeomanry. Tank strength consisted of 56 Mk VIB light tanks.
- **2nd Armoured Reconnaissance Brigade:** The unit consisted of the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards and the 15th/19th Kings Royal

Hussars. Tank strength consisted of 56 Mk VIB light tanks.

- **1st Infantry Division:** The unit consisted of the 13th/18th Royal Hussars (Queen Mary's Own). Tank strength consisted of 28 Mk VIB Light Tanks.
- **2nd Infantry Division:** The unit consisted of the 4th/7th Dragoon Guards. Tank strength consisted of 28 Mk VIB light tanks.
- **51st Infantry Division:** 1st The Lothians And Border Horse (Yeomanry). Tank strength consisted of 28 Mk VIB light tanks.

The ideal tank ratio in your army should be roughly three A13s to two Mk VIBs or VICs to one A9 or A10.

All the units in this selector can be found in the *Armies of Great Britain* supplement.

BRITISH 1ST ARMOURED DIVISION ARMOURED PLATOON

1 Command Vehicle from: A9, A10, A13, Universal Carrier, Mk IVB or Mk IVC to which you must give the Command Vehicle special rule for +25pts (see page 95 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook)
2 Vehicles: A9, A10, A13, Universal Carrier, Mk IVB or Mk IVC

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Medic
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)

Infantry

0–3 Infantry sections: Early war Regular or Inexperienced infantry sections

Artillery

0–1 Artillery unit:
Field artillery: 25pdr light howitzer
Anti-aircraft gun: 40mm heavy automatic cannon
Anti-tank gun: QF 2pdr light anti-tank gun

Armoured Car

0–1 Armoured car: Morris CS9

Tank

0–1 tank: A9, A10, A13, Universal Carrier, Mk IVB or Mk IVC

Transport and Tows

The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: Bren carrier, 15cwt, 30cwt, 3 ton trucks, utility cars and Quad tractors.

SPECIAL RULES

- Units may be Regular or Inexperienced.
- Armoured Division infantry sections may have a maximum of 8 men, and may add a Boys anti-tank rifle for +10pts instead of a LMG, and another soldier becomes the loader.
- Baptism of Fire: The British units in the following selector are just as described in the *Armies of Great Britain* book. However, they **must** choose the Rapid Fire national characteristic and **cannot** be purchased as Veterans.

In addition, the following rules **replace** the *Bombardment* and *Artillery Support* army special rules.

- Resolute: British infantry were resolute in defence. If a British infantry or artillery unit that was treated as in cover when the enemy fired at it suffers enough casualties to cause a Morale check, the unit benefits from a +1 Morale modifier for the check.
- Sticky: British infantry and artillery tended to get separated from advancing armour. British infantry and artillery units must always take an Order test when given an advance or run order, even if the unit is not pinned.

A British 2-pdr anti-tank gun makes ready

FALLSCHIRMJÄGER

The units in this selector are either new, in which case their names can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Gelb*, starting here, or are as described in the *Armies of Germany* book.

FALLSCHIRMJÄGER REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second

2 Fallschirmjäger squad (early war)

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain or Major

0–1 Medic

Infantry

0–4 Fallschirmjäger squad (early war)

0–2 MMG teams

0–3 Flamethrower teams

0–4 Heavy Hohlldungwaffen teams

SPECIAL RULES

- All units in this selector **must** be purchased as Veterans.
- Hohlldungwaffen: any man in a Fallschirmjäger squad may be equipped with a Light Hohlldungwaffen for +3pts per man.

1940 PANZER DIVISION

The battle of Poland had indicated that even the combined arms Panzer division was still too tank-heavy and hence too unwieldy to make optimum use of a limited number of armoured fighting vehicles. Accordingly, the integral Panzer brigade was disbanded and replaced by a single Panzer regiment of about 150 tanks organised into two battalions.

Similarly the infantry brigade headquarters was disbanded, but the division incorporated four battalions of infantry organised into two regiments (or three battalions in a single regiment) and a battalion of motorcycle troops.

A 1940 Panzer division commonly had:

- 1 Panzer regiment of 2 *Abteilungen* (battalions) with around 150 tanks

- 2 *Schützen* regiments, each of 2 *Abteilungen* of motorised infantry
- 1 *Kradschützen* motorcycle *Abteilung*
- 1 artillery regiment of 3 *Abteilungen*
- 1 *Aufklärungsabteilung* (reconnaissance battalion)
- 1 *Panzerjäger Abteilung* (anti-tank battalion)
- 1 *Pionier Abteilung* (engineer battalion)

However, the exact composition of a Panzer division could vary, especially in the type of tanks employed. Below are the combat tank strengths for the various Panzer divisions at the start of *Fall Gelb* and a rough guide to the relative proportions of each tank type in each division.

- **1st, 2nd, 3rd Panzer Divisions:** 45 Panzer I, 115 Panzer II, 58 Panzer III, 32 Panzer IV (a ratio of 1:2:1:1)
- **4th Panzer Division:** 135 Panzer I, 105 Panzer II, 40 Panzer III, 24 Panzer IV (a ratio of 5:4:2:1)
- **5th Panzer Division:** 97 Panzer I, 120 Panzer II, 52 Panzer III, 32 Panzer IV (a ratio of 2:2:1:1)
- **6th Panzer Division:** 60 Panzer II, 118 Panzer 35(t), 31 Panzer IV (a ratio of 2:4:1)
- **8th Panzer Division:** as 6th Panzer Division, but with Panzer 38(t) instead of the 35(t)
- **7th Panzer Division:** 34 Panzer I, 68 Panzer II, 91 Panzer 38(t), 24 Panzer IV (a ratio of 1:2:3:1)
- **9th Panzer Division:** 30 Panzer I, 54 Panzer II, 41 Panzer III, 16 Panzer IV (a ratio of 2:3:3:1)
- **10th Panzer Division:** 44 Panzer I, 113 Panzer II, 60 Panzer III, 32 Panzer IV (a ratio of 1:3:2:1)

For a description of the units see t*he Armies of Germany* supplement.

When using the selector, choose tanks from the list above depending on the Panzer division that you wish to use. Use the ratios above as a rough guide to the likelihood of encountering any particular model in the division. For example, there is nothing to stop a player with a 9th Panzer selector using all sixteen Panzer IVs, but his opponent may feel a little miffed.

1940 PANZER DIVISION ARMOURED PLATOON

1 Command Vehicle from: *Funkspähwagen* SdKfz 263 (8-Rad), *Panzerbefehlswagen* SdKfz 265 Pz I, *Panzerbefehlswagen* SdKfz 267-268 Pz III or any half-track with the Command Rule (from *Armies of Germany* or *Tank War*)

2 Tanks (availability dependant on the division, see list above)

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain or Major

0–1 Medic

0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery or Air)

Infantry

1–3 Infantry squads: Heer infantry squad, *Kradschützen* squad, a maximum of 1 Heer pioneer squad.

0–1 Sniper team

0–2 MMG teams

0–1 Mortar team: light or medium

0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Artillery

0–1 Artillery unit from:
Artillery gun: light or medium
Anti-tank gun: Pak 36
Anti-aircraft gun: Flak 38, Flak 36 or 88mm AA/AT Flak 36

Armoured Cars and Recce Vehicles

0–1 Armoured car or Recce vehicle: Kfz 13, SdKfz 222 or SdKfz 231 (6-Rad)

In 1940 the German army was losing 2,400 trucks every quarter year due to simple wear and tear, whilst replacements were only being produced at the rate of about 1,000 over the same period. So concerned about the lack of motor transportation was German General Franz Halder, that he actually proposed a drastic 'demotorisation programme' to procure horses, carts and harnesses to allow the German army to replace its trucks with horse-drawn transport.

Tanks, Tank Destroyers, Self-propelled artillery and Anti-aircraft vehicles

0–2 vehicles from: Tanks (availability dependant on the division, see list above), *Panzerjäger* I, Panzer I sIG33, SdKfz 251/2, SdKfz 8 with armoured cab, or SdKfz 10/4 with Flak 38

Transport and Tows

The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: Kubelwagen, truck, SdKfz 7, SdKfz 10, SdKfz 251/1. One SdKfz 251/1 per army may be upgraded to a 251/10

SPECIAL RULES

•Forward The Guns: German anti-tank units were highly aggressive. The player may reroll failed morale checks for his anti-tank guns when testing for an Advance or Run order.

- The Initiative Training and Hitler's Buzz Saw army special rules are in effect, as described on page 19 of the *Armies of Germany* supplement.

Panzer IV Ausf D

GERMAN MOTORISED INFANTRY

Army Group A, the southern and strongest pincer of *Fall Gelb* included the Grossdeutschland, 2nd, 13th and 29th Motorised Infantry Divisions in 12th Army with the SS Totenkopf initially held in reserve.

Army Group B, the weaker northern arm, included the 20th Motorised in 6th Army, and the SS Leibstandarte and the SS Der Führer motorised units in 18th Army.

A 1940 German motorised division would have three infantry regiments each of: three battalions of motorised infantry, a light howitzer support company, a motorcycle platoon, and an anti-tank company. Divisional assets included a reconnaissance battalion with motorcycles and armoured cars, and artillery regiment with two battalions of light and one battalion of heavy howitzers, an anti-tank battalion and an engineer battalion. All equipment would be motorised or towed.

Detailed information about the units is given in the *Armies of Germany* supplement.

GERMAN MOTORISED INFANTRY REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second
2 Infantry sections: Heer Infantry sections, Heer veteran infantry sections, Waffen SS sections (early war), SS Totenkopf

plus:

Headquarters
0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Medic
0–1 Forward Observer (either Artillery or Air)

Infantry
0–4 Infantry sections: Heer Infantry sections, *Heer* veteran infantry sections, Waffen SS sections (early war), SS Totenkopf, Kradschützen sections, a maximum of 1 Heer Pioneer section
0–2 MMG teams
0–1 Mortar team: light or medium mortar
0–1 Flamethrower team
0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Artillery
0–1 Gun from:
Anti-tank gun: Pak 36
Field artillery: Light, medium or heavy
Anti-aircraft gun: Flak 38, Flak 36 or 88mm Flak 36

Armoured Cars

0–1 Armoured car or recce vehicle: SdKfz 222, SdKfz231 (6-Rad) or SdKfz231 (8-Rad)

Transports and Tows

The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: Kubelwagen, truck, SdKfz 7, SdKfz 10, SdKfz 251/1 or Heavy field car

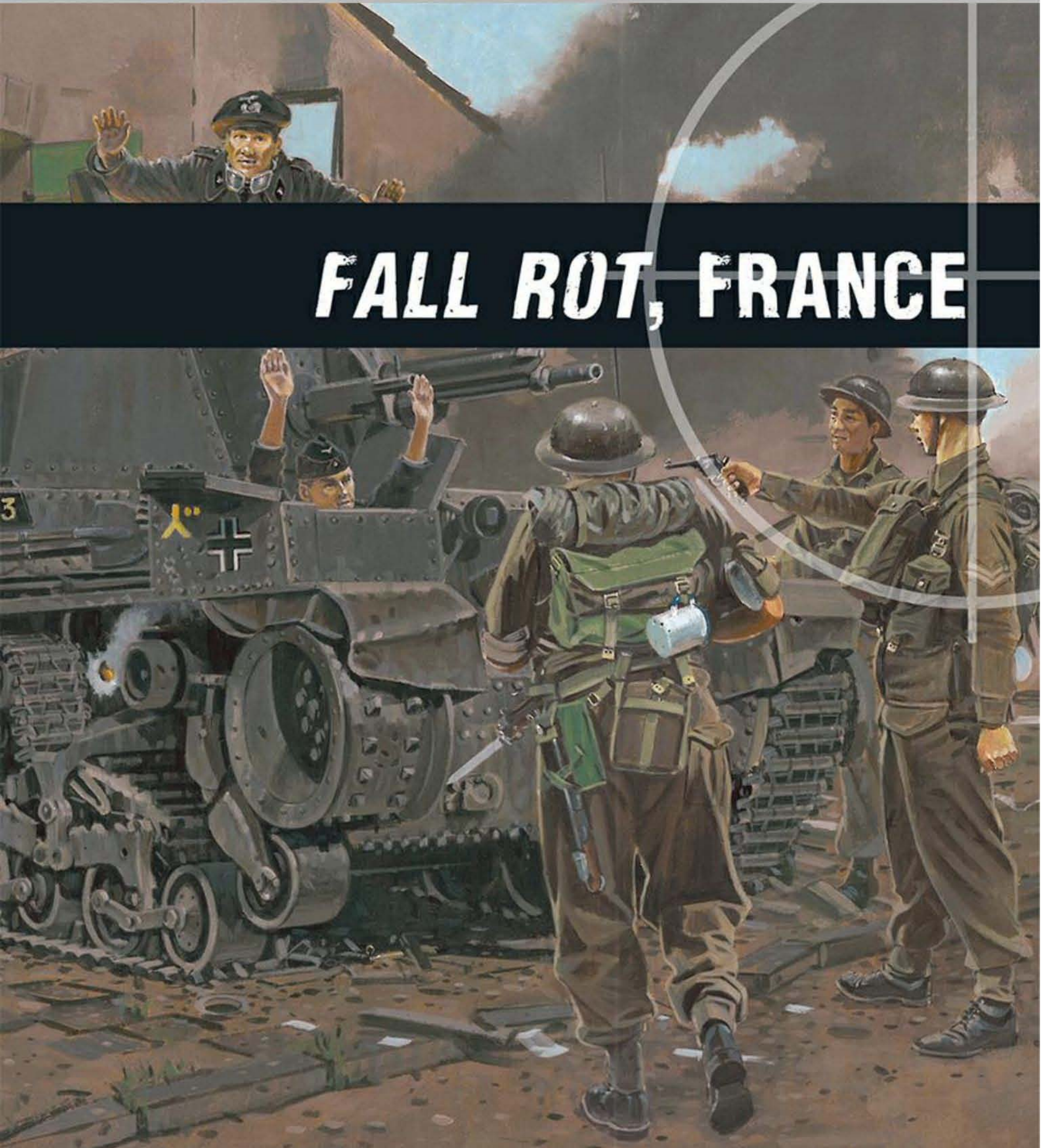
SPECIAL RULES

- German Heer units are purchased as early war, either Regular or Veteran, but the SS Totenkopf were largely drawn from concentration camp guards and assorted thugs with limited combat experience: use the early war Waffen SS entry to represent them, but they are Inexperienced and Green rather than Veterans, at a discounted cost of -6pts per man (so the initial squad costs 35pts and each additional man costs +7pts).
- Forward The Guns: German anti-tank units were highly aggressive. The player may reroll failed morale checks for his anti-tank guns when testing for an Advance or Run order.
- The Initiative Training and Hitler's Buzz Saw army special rules are in effect, as described on page 19 of the *Armies of Germany* supplement.

GERMAN INFANTRY DIVISIONS

An infantry division was organised in a similar way to a mobile infantry division, but without most of the transports and heavy artillery would be pulled by horse teams. Use the ‘1940 The Battle of France’ selector from the *Armies of Germany* book, and in addition add horse-drawn limber to the Tows section of the selector.

The German war machine rolls through another town



FALL ROT, FRANCE

The battle for Cassel, by Howard Gerrard © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Campaign 219: *Dunkirk 1940.*

INTRODUCTION

On 23 May Lord Gort, commander of the BEF, realised his position in northern France was hopeless. He ignored Weygand's further plans for counterattacks and for a northern redoubt – the Réduit de Flandres – and ordered a retreat to the coast while ports were still in Allied hands. In doing so he saved the British army to fight another day.

The German army halted on 24 May for three days to regroup, allowing Gort the time to set up new defences around the Channel ports, notably Dunkirk. The French 1st Army shielded the evacuation in a heroic stand at Lille, but the Germans controlled the coast by 4 June.

61 Allied divisions were destroyed in the defeat in the Low Countries, including most of the mechanised formations and the best infantry units. Weygand was left with just 64 French divisions and a single British division, the elite 51st Highlanders, to defend a line around 600 miles long.

He faced 142 German divisions including the elite mobile units that had been refurbished for the push south. In addition the Luftwaffe had total air superiority over France while Weygand had no reserves, little armour and no mobility. The roads were choked with perhaps as many as ten million French civilian refugees on the move

On the plus side the British repatriated 110,000 French infantry that had been rescued by sea from northern France. French mechanised mobilisation had been fortunately inefficient, so enough equipment remained to create the 1st and 2nd DCR and re-equip the 4th DCR.

The morale of the French army was actually very good at this stage, possibly because all political illusions had been torn aside and the French soldier dug in for a fight to the finish. Weygand produced an excellent plan in which he concentrated his infantry and artillery in defensive 'hedgehogs' with the mechanised units held in reserve for counterattacks. The pattern of towns and villages spaced through the French countryside greatly facilitated this strategy as the British were to discover in Normandy in 1944. French artillery, in particular, was lethal now that it was given a fighting chance.

The bulk of the German mobile divisions were concentrated in Army Group B, which attacked along the Paris axis on 5 June. The Panzers were stopped dead for three days in a vicious war of attrition with French artillery. Fighting on the River Aisne was particularly vicious, the Germans losing 80 out of 500 armoured vehicles in the first attack. There were no more easy victories and Panzer losses mounted until the front collapsed at Abbeville and Paris fell on 14 June.

The Luftwaffe was the key to breaking the French line despite the determination of the defenders. The Luftwaffe was able to neutralise the artillery in the hedgehogs one by one, and successfully prevented the French mechanised divisions from concentrating to counterattack. Of course the RAF and USAAF did much the same to the German Army in Normandy a few years later.

A German attack on the fortifications of the Maginot Line that had been depleted of defenders commenced on the 15 June and ended with the capture of the last bunker on 10 July, but most capitulated without a fight when France asked for an Armistice on 25 June 1940.

The battle of France was over.

Winston Churchill recognised the new role of airpower and was quick to attribute the success of Operation *Dynamo* – the evacuation from Dunkirk – to British air superiority. It was perhaps more a case of morale boosting bravado than serious analysis, but it does show something of the spirit of the times. “In the fighting over Dunkirk”, he says, “we undoubtedly gained a local mastery of the air and inflicted on the German air force losses on the scale of three or four to one.” The troops on the beaches were not necessarily aware of the fighting going on above their heads, often finding it difficult to distinguish one plane from another and favouring all with a burst of anti-aircraft fire for good measure!

A cautious French patrol advances

TIMELINE

1940

23 May: Lord Gort decides to save the BEF

24 May: Panzer divisions halt for refurbishment

26 May: Panzer divisions start drive on Dunkirk

26 May: Mussolini decides to join the war

27 May: BEF evacuation starts

28 May: Belgium surrenders

29 May: French army evacuation starts

4 June: Evacuation ends

5 June: *Fall Rot* commences

8 June: Weygand line pierced

9 June: Surviving French aircraft withdrawn to North Africa

12 June: 51st Highland Division surrenders

14 June: Paris falls

15 June: Attack on the Maginot Line commences

15 June: British evacuation of remaining forces

18 June: Cherbourg captured

20 June: Italy attacks south-east France with 50 divisions

21 June: Seven French Army divisions stop the Italian invasion dead

22 June: France asks for armistice

6 July: Germany celebrates victory in World War II

10 July: Last Maginot Line bunker surrenders

SCENARIO 12: THE BATTLE FOR CASSEL

The little French town of Cassel stands on a hilltop 20 miles or so south of Dunkirk and 176 metres above the plain of Flanders. On a good day you can see Belgium, England, France and Holland from the top, where stands a statue of General Haig (who had his headquarters there in World War I).

On 28 May, the day Belgium surrendered, Cassel was held by the 145th Brigade of the 48th Division supported by the brigade's and the Worcestershire Yeomanry's 24 anti-tank guns and K Battery of the 5th Royal Horse Artillery with four 18pdr howitzers. The infantry consisted of two battalions: the 2nd Battalion of the Gloucestershire regiment and the 4th Battalion of the Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Regiment.

The British defence had two days to dig in before being attacked by 6th Panzer and the Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler motorised infantry. 6th Panzer's Panzer Regiment 11 put in an immediate attack without waiting for artillery or infantry support. It was equipped with 34 Panzer 35(t)s, 17 Panzer IVs and 15 Panzer IIs, a tank-type ratio of about 2:1:1.

The battle lasted from 10am until midnight, when the Germans broke off the attack after losing 40 Panzers. The British troops were surrounded by the German advance and eventually forced to surrender.

Once again it proved fruitless for tanks to attack regular infantry dug into an urban environment and supported by adequate anti-tank weapons.

BEF infantry section

LEGENDS OF BRITAIN

MAD JACK CHURCHILL

“Any officer who goes into action without his sword is improperly dressed.” – Jack Churchill

Born in Surrey in 1906, Jack Churchill was a many-talented man; amongst other things, he excelled at archery (he represented Britain at the 1939 World Archery championships) and bagpipe-playing. In his early life he served in the army in Burma, and then worked as a newspaper editor, an actor and a male model. At the outbreak of the war he joined the army again. As part of the BEF, he went into battle in France carrying a Scottish broadsword at his side and a longbow on his back. In May 1940 he become the only British soldier to have killed an enemy in World War II with a bow, when he shot dead a German NCO.

After Dunkirk, he joined the Commandos, with whom he participated in many actions in almost every single theatre where British troops fought, earning many decorations. He used to go into battle not only with broadsword and bow, but also with bagpipes. In 1943 in Sicily, he led a single corporal against a German observation and mortar position behind enemy lines, capturing 42 prisoners; he himself was eventually captured and held in Germany until the end of the war in Europe. Shipped with all hurry to Burma to fight the Japanese, he arrived too late, the war was over. Disappointed, he allegedly commented: “If it wasn't for those damn Yanks, we could have kept the war going another ten years!”

Cost: 195pts (Veteran)

Team: 1 officer and up to 2 other men

Weapons: Jack Churchill is equipped with broadsword and bow (counts as a rifle). Other men are equipped with submachine gun, pistol or rifle/carbine as depicted on the model.

Options:

- Churchill may be accompanied by up to 2 men at a cost of +14pts per man

Special Rules:

- Lead by example (and bagpipe!): Churchill's Morale bonus is +4. Whenever his order die shows Down or Rally, Churchill is playing his bagpipes, and so the range of his Morale bonus is increased to 24".
- Tough Fighters, as described on page 70 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook.
- Behind enemy lines: When Outflanking as described on page 119 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook, this unit ignores the -1 modifier to the Order test for coming onto the table.

A BEF Carden-Loyd carrier and crew

FORCES

The British force is selected from the British Dunkirk Perimeter selector (see here).

The German player should use the 1940 Panzer Division selector (see here) with tank types suitable for 6th Panzer Division. Half the units **must** be tanks (i.e. fully tracked and half-tracked vehicles for the purposes of this scenario).

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 1: Envelopment' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook. The British are the defenders and should be set up in cover amongst buildings, ruins and rubble. Note all German forces except for tanks (i.e. tracked vehicles, as above) must be placed in reserve in the second wave.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

Players receive one Campaign Point for winning the scenario by two to five victory points and three Campaign Points for winning by six or more victory points. Both players get a Campaign Point each for a draw. A player receives a bonus of two Campaign Points if he destroys all his opponent's tracked vehicles and a bonus of three Campaign Points if he completely destroys his opponent's forces.

PLAYER NOTES

The German player faces a quandary in that his tanks will be first on the table which raises the dilemma of whether he sends them in against the hidden anti-tank weapons before waiting for other arms in support. Standard military tactics suggest not, but then he will lose tempo and he must get units into the defender's set-up zone by the end of the game to secure a decent score of victory points. On balance, I suspect most players will send in the tanks immediately and trust to fortune.

The British player might be tempted to maximise anti-tank weapons at the expense of all else, but he should remember that half the German units might not be armoured.

If the German player wishes to be historically accurate he should take only tank choices, Panzer 35(t)s, Panzer IIs and Panzer IVs and forgo Preparatory Bombardment. However this will make for a very difficult scenario to win. If the players decide to follow this course, the British player should forget the advice above and take as many anti-tank weapons as he can stuff into his platoon(s).

Pz 35(t)

SCENARIO 13: HEDGEHOG

This scenario represents the last stand of the French army on the Weygand Line. It simulates an attack by a Panzer division on a French village 'hedgehog' that has a 360 degree perimeter defence. A French mechanised column is hurrying to the garrison's relief. The scenario depicts the moment when all three forces clash.

FORCES

The French were using all sorts of *ad hoc* formations by this time so the French player may choose anything from the '1940 The Battle of France' selector in the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement, with the exception of a Forward Air Observer. Both the units initially deployed and the first wave units can only be infantry and artillery units.

The German player selects from the 1940 Panzer Division selector (see here). I suggest using 1st Panzer Division, which was heavily involved in combat on the Aisne. Johannes Bölter's Panzer IV may be used if 1st Panzer is chosen.

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 4: Hold Until Relieved' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook for the game. Note that the German attackers can use hidden set up unlike the French defenders. This is because the Luftwaffe had total air superiority so could carry out extensive air reconnaissance while denying the French the same advantage.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

The winning player receives six Campaign Points for his victory. In the event of a draw, the French player receives three Campaign Points.

LEGENDS OF GERMANY

JOHANNES BÖLTER

Johannes Bölter is all but unknown now, but was one of the highest scoring tank aces of World War II, knocking out 134 enemy AFVs. His career started in Poland in the 1st Panzer Regiment of the 1st Panzer Division. He destroyed four enemy tanks in Poland and seven in the battle of France, where he received the first of a number of wounds. After the battle of France he took part in *Barbarossa* before moving on to Tiger tanks, serving as platoon leader in Tiger Battalion 502. This unit spent the war on the Eastern front using a mixture of Panzer IIIs, Tiger Is, Tiger IIs and even Hetzers, claiming 1,400 Soviet tanks and 2,000 guns. Bölter survived the war and died in 1987.

BÖLTER'S PANZER IVB

Cost: 245pts (Veteran)

Weapons: 1 turret-mounted light howitzer with coaxial MMG and 1 forward facing hull-mounted MMG

Damage Value: 9+ (medium tank)

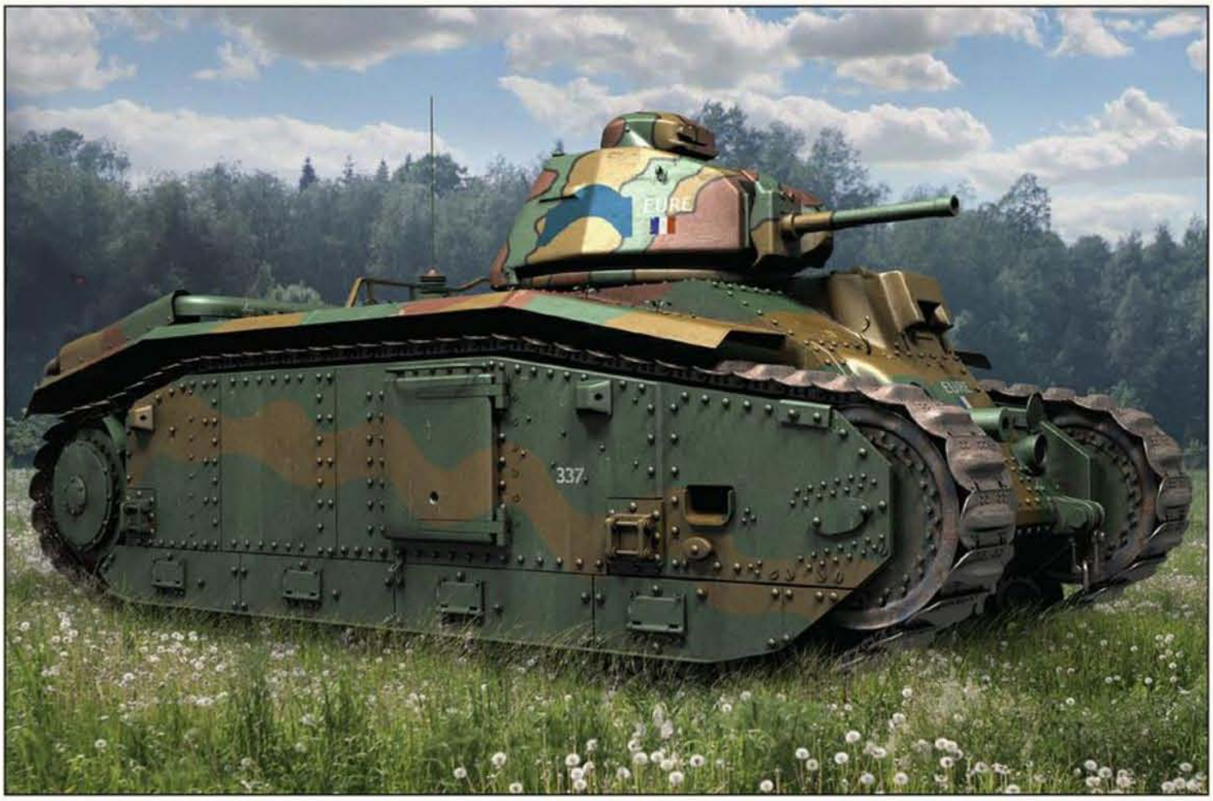
Special Rules:

- Grit: This unit ignores the first pin marker it receives in the game, which is discarded.

Skills:

- Quick Reflexes
- Deadeye
- Hair Trigger
- Battle Awareness

Char 2C and French infantry



Char B1 bis, by Richard Chasemore © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Duel 33: Panzer IV vs Char B1 bis.

SCENARIO 14: THE MAGINOT LINE

“He who defends everything, defends nothing” – Frederick the Great

Throughout history, fortifications have been limited to defending key points that an enemy must capture before proceeding. Additionally, such fortifications are rarely intended to hold out indefinitely against an enemy field army, just hold out long enough until a relief force can be assembled.

World War I appeared to suggest that this truism no longer applied. Industrialisation not only greatly increased the population of European countries, but it also raised the percentage of that population that could be released from food production and equipped for war. The result was vast armies of millions of men that were capable of fortifying and manning a line that run from the Swiss border to the English Channel and war became a giant siege where decisive results could only be achieved when millions of casualties had been sacrificed.

The French drew the conclusion from their experiences in World War I that now a nation really could defend everything, that it could build a defensive wall for hundreds of miles that would be capable of withstanding a defender more or less indefinitely. Unfortunately, World War I turned out to be an aberration. The mobility and shock power of mechanised warfare hinted at in 1918 soon restored business as usual.

The Maginot Line was not a continuous fortified belt between the

German and French borders, but a series of lines linked by bunkers with rows of anti-personnel and anti-tank obstacles such as upended steel rails. It was never completed because of budget restrictions.

The Maginot Line was layered like an onion. The outer layer was the Border Post Line that consisted of observation bunkers armed with light weapons whose primary purpose was to sound the alarm in case of a surprise attack and to delay the attackers. These bunkers were often disguised as houses or similar. About three miles behind this line was a series of anti-tank weapon blockhouses, again designed more to delay than hold an invasion.

Finally there was the Maginot Line proper, marked first by tank-stopping 'dragon's teeth' (three metre long metal rails buried in six rows with the top third above ground), backed by barbed wire. Fortified concrete and steel blockhouses were scattered behind these obstacles.

The primary defensive structures were concrete bunkers, *ouvrages* and *gros ouvrages*. *Gros ouvrages* were armed with 75mm and 135mm howitzers firing through slits or in retractable, rotating turrets. *Ouvrages* were about one-third smaller and were limited in armament to infantry heavy weapons, light and medium anti-tank guns and medium mortars.

Typically these were not built as single Vauban-style forts, but as multiple blocks linked by underground tunnels rather like the Belgian fortress of Eben Emael. The number of blocks varied from one to four for *ouvrages*, but *gros ouvrages* might have up to 28, but ten would be more typical.

Infantry heavy weapons in *ouvrages* were often mounted in a cloche, a fixed non-retractable, non-rotating armoured turret, of which there were various types. The armour seemed to have varied from 20 to 30 centimetres thick and was impervious to even heavy auto cannon.

Many of the larger *ouvrages* were buried at least on the eastern side by piling rubble in front until only the turrets and cloche were visible.

In between the *ouvrages* were *casemates d'intervalles*, reinforced concrete one-floor structures possibly with additional below ground living quarters and ammunition stores. They were divided into cells armed with twin medium machine guns and light or medium anti-tank guns.

Fortress troops garrisoned the line, but field divisions were supposed to act as interval troops for counter attacks if part of the line was pierced, and fortified shelters were provided in the rear.

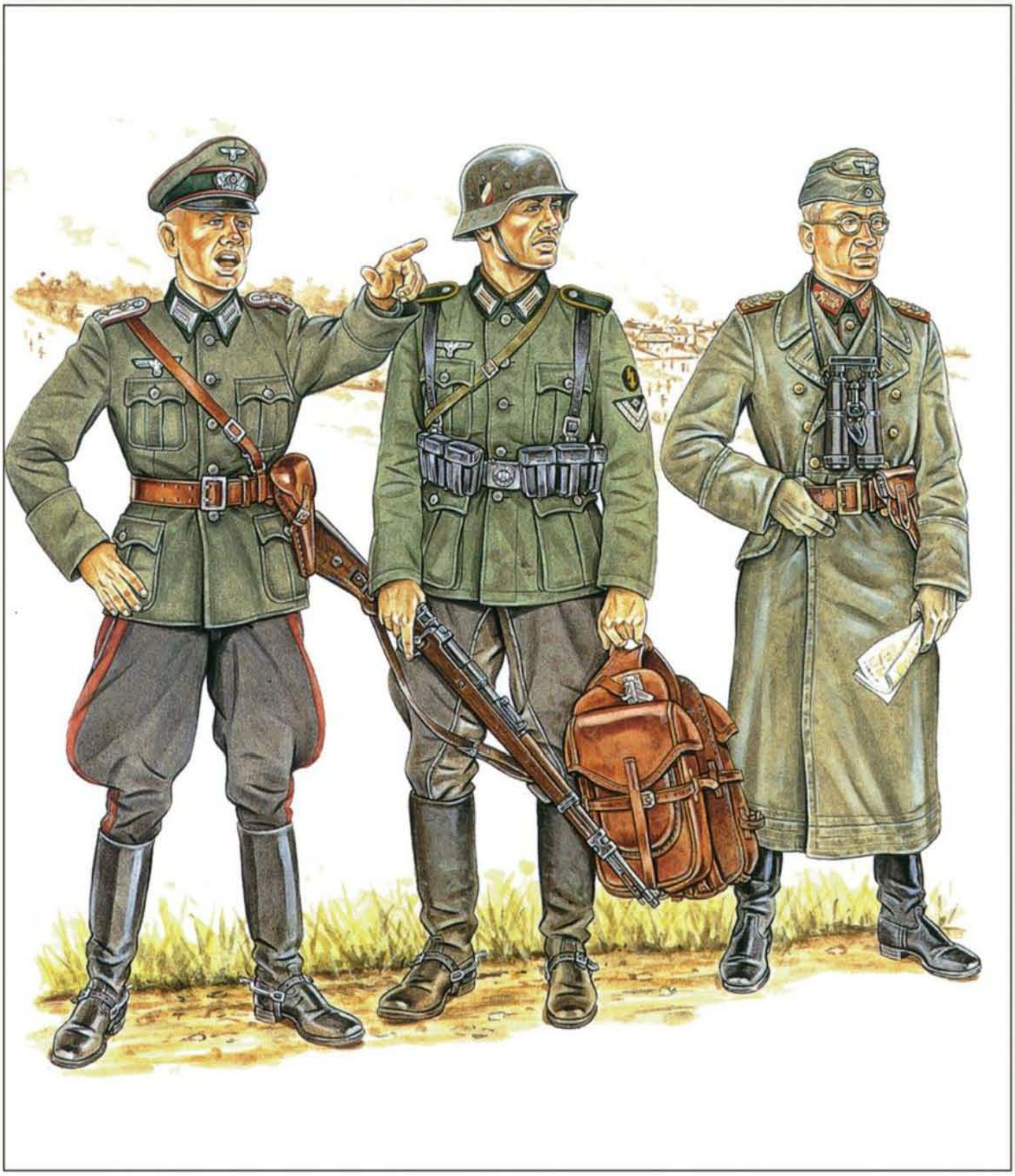
Some of the heaviest fighting on the Maginot Line occurred at Ouvrage La Ferté, called Panzerwerk 505 by the Germans, which is now preserved as a monument. The *ouvrage* is located about 12 miles from Sedan on a hill looking down on the River Chiers where it could interdict movement along the valley.

Supported by two artillery casements, the fortification anchored the left wing of the Maginot Line, but suffered from budget cuts in its design. It consisted of two blockhouses connected by an underground tunnel and in 1940 was surrounded by barbed wire and dragon's teeth to the front. However there was no underground tunnel to reinforce or evacuate the 107-strong garrison when under fire.

The easy capture of Ouvrage La Ferté on 18 May during *Fall Gelb* sent a shock wave through the French establishment. At 1800 hours, heavy howitzers opened up on the fort, blowing holes in the barbed wire and jamming a turret. Infantry supported by a pioneer combat engineer battalion closed on the fort from the west and south. An attempt by French infantry supported by Char B1 *bis* heavy tanks to relieve the fort was stopped with heavy losses. At 1900 hours the German pioneers and infantry, supported by 88mm flak guns, close assaulted the blockhouse.

Each blockhouse took ten minutes to neutralise and set alight with flamethrowers, grenades and demolition charges.

The French command repeatedly refused permission to attempt a breakout and more than a hundred men died pointlessly of asphyxiation in the underground tunnels rather than surrender.



French troops, 1939–40 (L–R): 92e RI chef de bataillon in campaign dress; patrol member in light campaign order; chasseur à pied in campaign dress, by Mike Chappell © Osprey Publishing Ltd. Taken from Men-at-Arms 315: The French Army 1939–45 (1).

SCENARIO 14, PART 1: THE RELIEF FORCE

Scenario 14 is played in two parts, either sequentially or simultaneously on two tables.

When a part of the Maginot Line came under serious assault French doctrine was to despatch a relief force from reserves held back for that purpose. German tactics were to surround the fortifications and to set up a screen to prevent the relief force coming to the aid of the besieged garrison. It was all very medieval in concept. Part 1 depicts the battle of the relief force.

FORCES

The French player may select forces from the '1940 The Battle of France' selector in the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement. To be historically accurate the only tanks used should be Char B1 *bis*.

The German player may select any infantry or artillery units from the '1940 The Battle of France' selector in the *Armies of Germany* supplement. The only vehicles he may have are tows for artillery pieces.

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 1: Envelopment' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook. The French are the attackers and the Germans are the defenders.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

The winning player receives one Campaign Point or three Campaign Points if he wins by five points or more.

LINKING WITH PART 2

If Part 1 and Part 2 are played simultaneously, then French units that exit the table are immediately placed in the reserves of the French forces on the second table with their order dice, and may be ordered onto the table right away!

If Part 1 and Part 2 are played sequentially, then make a note of each French unit that exits the table off the German table edge, noting the turn it exited, and the condition the unit was in. You will need this information for Part 2.

The defenders of France face the German Blitzkrieg

SCENARIO 14, PART 2: ATTACK ON THE BLOCKHOUSES

Part 2 recreates the German assault on Maginot Line blockhouses. French units exiting Table 1 through the German set-up zone are placed in Reserve on Table 2 at the beginning of the same turn that they exited. They may enter the game from that turn. The unit should be in the same condition it was in when it exited Table 1 with regard to strength, damage and pinning.

FORCES

The French player selects his force from the Maginot Line fortifications (see here). He then sets up his fortifications on the middle line of the table. The German Player selects his force from '1940 The Battle of France' selector in the *Armies of Germany* supplement. The only vehicles he may have are tows for artillery pieces.

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 4: Hold Until Relieved' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook with the following modifications.

- The German player gets a Preparatory Bombardment, see page 113 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook. The French player may receive reinforcements from successfully completing Part 1 (see above).

- All German units in this scenario can be equipped with demolition charges (anti-tank grenades) for +2pts per model.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

Points are awarded not for controlling objectives, but for destroying or saving fortifications. The German player gets one Campaign Point for each blockhouse cell destroyed and for each artillery embrasure destroyed by the end of the game. The French player receives one Campaign Point for each blockhouse cell remaining undestroyed at the end of the game. He only scores points for buried blockhouses if their turret has spent all but one of the game turns in the raised position; cowardly custard turret crews are of no value to France. The French player also receives one Campaign Point for each artillery embrasure that contains an undestroyed weapon and at least one crew member still alive at the end of the game.

SCENARIO 15: ITALY ATTACKS

"I only need a few thousand dead so that I can sit at the peace conference as a man who has fought." – Mussolini

Mussolini decided on war on 26 May for the most cynical of reasons. Italy declared war on France and Britain on 10 June 1940 after the battle of France was already lost. The Italian army launched an invasion on 20 June and almost immediately ran into difficulties.

Many of the French were second-rate reservists in their forties, but the defence also included first-rate Alpine divisions including crack ski battalions. In addition, the terrain favoured the defence and the French had fortified likely access routes, which were entirely predictable.

The Italian army was unprepared for a serious war against another European power. It was understrength in both men and equipment, and such heavy weapons as it had were obsolete. Much of the artillery dated back to World War I. But they did not expect to have to fight: they seem to have been under the illusion that the French would not resist and so the Italians marched off in peacetime columns.

The Italians advanced on two axes, one through the Alps and the other along the coast. The alpine invasion ground to a halt as soon as it ran into the fortifications of the Alpine Line. Major snowstorms did not exactly help; the Italians suffered more than 2,000 casualties through frostbite.

The attack along the coastal route towards the final objective of Nice enjoyed more success. The French had built a series of bunkers supported by about 38,000 infantry. The Italian attack on this axis could call on seven infantry divisions. On 23 June, units of the Cosseria Division bypassed the French line to enter Menton, built on the ancient Via Julia Augusta. A grinding urban combat erupted in which the Italian soldier showed his mettle, pushing the hard-fighting French out of the town. Unfortunately it was a strategically pointless battle as the French still controlled the Pont St Louis on the border, one of those high-arch alpine arches spanning a deep boulder-strewn valley, and hence the road behind the Italian spearhead.

This five-mile penetration marked the high point of the Italian adventure. In general the invasion was an utter disaster, Italy suffering over 6,000 casualties compared to French losses of 229. The campaign gave ominous warning of the military debacles that were to follow in Greece, North Africa and, worst of all, Russia.

FORCES

This is an infantry battle. The Cosseria was a regular infantry division so no vehicles should be used. Italian forces should be chosen from the '1940–41 The Invasion of Greece' selector in the *Armies of Italy and the Axis* supplement, and their infantry units are limited to Regular or Inexperienced. If players really want to use vehicles, allow a maximum of one L3 tankette per Reinforced Platoon: we'll assume they sneaked around the French roadblock.

The French player should choose his army from the '1940 The Battle of France' selector in the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement. Again, to be historically accurate no vehicles should be used, but if the Italians have access to L3s then the French may have R35s.

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 3: Point Defence' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook. The game is played along the length of the table, with the defender's set-up zone along one of the short ends (the west edge). The scenario recreates the Battle of Menton. This is a typical Riviera town, laid out on the strip between the sea (the south edge, which is impassable) and the mountains (the north edge, which is also impassable), with stout buildings and narrow lanes. Lay out a tangled urban battlefield along the road around the bay.

VICTORY – CAMPAIGN POINTS

Each objective controlled at the end of the game is worth two Campaign Points.

Chasseurs Ardennais catch a German patrol unawares

SCENARIO 16: THE ROAD TO MILAN

Italy was not in the front rank of industrial nations in the 1930s and so had only one tank manufacturer, Ansaldo, which used Fiat engines. Italian strategy in this period assumed that any serious war fought against another industrial power would be in the mountainous northern part of the peninsula. These factors led the Italian military to conclude that they needed physically small, lightweight, inexpensive tanks that could traverse the mountain roads and bridges. Range was not seen as important as it was intended to transport the vehicles on lorries or special trailers.

The upshot of these specifications is that in June 1940 the Italian army could field 1,400 tankettes, most of them variants on the L3 model, but only 96 M11 medium tanks as against a putative establishment of 400. These were grouped into three armoured divisions.

The Centauro, 131st Armoured, was formed from the 1st Armoured Brigade. It fought in Albania in 1939, but was not combat ready until the end of 1940 when it was reinforced with medium tanks for the invasion of Greece.

The Ariete, 132nd Armoured, was formed in Milan in 1939 and consisted of the 8th Bersegliari Motorised Infantry, the 132nd Artillery and the 32nd Tank Regiments. It was mainly equipped with L3/35s and a handful of M11/39s. In 1940 the division was held in reserve during the invasion of France.

The Littorio, 133rd Armoured, traces its origins to the 4th Infantry Division that fought in Spain, hence the fascist name. In 1939 the division was upgraded to armoured status and consisted of four tank battalions, three infantry battalions and two artillery regiments. The tank battalions fielded about 200 L3/35 tankettes each.

The Littorio was arguably the most powerful formation in the Italian army and it spearheaded the attack into the Alps in June 1940. The attack stalled on the French Alpine Line and the Italian tankettes proved incapable of mastering the rough terrain. This was ironic as that was the primary reason given for using such a light design, although in reality one might wonder whether Mussolini and his henchmen were more concerned with boasting about tank numbers than effectiveness.

The Italian armoured divisions had minimal impact on the battle of France and were not worth the minimal expenditure of money or the maximal expenditure of political capital on their creation. Nevertheless. an interesting scenario is to consider a Franco-Italian war that, through some twist of history, broke out before France had been destroyed by the Panzer divisions. In such a hypothetical conflict it is easy to imagine the Italian forces in the Alps thrown back in disarray to be pursued by vengeful *poilus* (French soldiers: literally, 'hairy ones').

FORCES

As armoured reserve, the Ariete would have been the key division tasked with halting the French advance, so I suggest players use the Italian Ariete 1940 selector (see here). Alternatively, use the '1940–41 Invasion of Greece' selector from the *Armies of Italy and the Axis* supplement.

The French player has a number of options (see the *Armies of France and the Allies* for details):

- **An Alpine Reinforced Platoon:** use the '1940 The Battle of France' selector, but with the following exceptions: all infantry squads must be Groupe Franc/SES/GIA Veteran Infantry, all other infantry and artillery units must be chosen as Veterans. The only vehicles allowed are soft-skins reinforced by a maximum of one R35/39 light tank per platoon.
- **A Mechanised Reinforced Platoon:** chosen from the DLM selector (see here). For the purposes of game balance it might be wise to assume

that the DLM unit was obliged to leave its Somua S35 tanks behind, perhaps because they were needed against the Germans, or maybe they could not get across the Alps, or for some such reason.

- **A Cavalry Reinforced Platoon:** chosen from the DLC selector (see here).

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 4: Hold Until Relieved' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook. Either side can be the attacker or the defender as instructed in the scenario. A suitable objective could be a bridge over a tributary of the Po, a village, or an important crossroads.

ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

It is beyond the scope of this book to follow the fortunes of a French invasion force of Italy any further, but there is an excellent and novel campaign to be made out of hypothetical 'What if?' situations like the one outlined here.

Suppose Italy and France got into a shooting war before the Panzers wrecked France? The Italian attack would undoubtedly have been a disaster. Suppose the French followed up by a full-scale counter-invasion? One could run a wonderful campaign based on a reverse Italian campaign with the Allies marching on Rome from the north. Suppose the Germans sent Rommel with an Italien Korps? The British would no doubt respond.

ADDITIONAL UNITS

ITALIAN UNITS

L3/35 R CENTRO RADIO

This was a command version of the L3 tankette equipped with a Marelli RF 3 CV or RF 1 CA radio, which were often upgraded to a Siemens. It proved satisfactory at the platoon or company level, but was far too small a vehicle to operate effectively as a regimental command tank. At this level it was phased out as fast as possible for the larger L6/40 which was used in the Ukraine, but that is beyond the scope of this book. The basic model was unarmed to save space, but bitter experience often saw guns retrospectively refitted.

Cost: 60pts (Inexperienced), 75pts (Regular), 90pts (Veteran)
Weapons: None
Damage Value: 7+ (tankette)
Options:
•May add a single hull-mounted forward facing MMG for +10pts
Special Rules:
•Command Vehicle

THE MAGINOT LINE

The bewildering complexities of the defences of the Maginot Line are simplified here for game purposes.

BLOCKHOUSE CELL

A Blockhouse is a unit, and therefore gets an Order die as normal. A Blockhouse consists of a ***cell*** to which may be fitted ***one*** embrasure, and ***one*** cloche or turret.

BLOCKHOUSE CELL

Cost: 150pts + options fitted

Weapons: depends on cloche and/or turret fitted on the cell

Damage Value: 10+

Options:

- The blockhouse cell may be buried for +50pts, in which case it cannot be attacked in any way, but equally it cannot be equipped with an embrasure.

Special Rules:

- Treat each blockhouse cell as an immobile armoured vehicle with the following modifications:
  - Hits by indirect fire weapons have no effect and are discarded.
  - Pen modifiers for side armour and top armour are ignored, only the +2 for rear armour applies.
  - Tanks cannot assault it.
  - Infantry units don’t need to test for Tank Fear in order to assault it.
  - When testing for damage on the Armoured Targets Damage Results table treat immobilised as crew stunned.
  - If a blockhouse cell is destroyed then any embrasure weapon and crew, and any cloche or turret on the cell are also destroyed.

- A buried blockhouse that has lost all its cloches and turrets is considered to be destroyed.

CLOCHES

Along with turrets, cloches are effectively the weapons-bearing turrets of the Blockhouse cell, in a similar way to which a turret belongs to the vehicles it is fitted on.

Cloches…

- Can only be fitted to a blockhouse cell that is not buried.
- Have ports that allowed their weapons to be fired in any direction, so it counts as a normal tank turret for the weapons it carries.

VDP-CLOCHE

The *Vision Directe et Périscopique* cloche was fitted with periscopes for observation.

Cost: 10pts

Weapons: none

Special Rules:

- Observation: all artillery units in fortifications can draw line of sight for indirect fire from the cloche, as if they had a spotter in the cloche.

GFM-CLOCHE

The *Guetteur et Fusil-Mitrailleur,* Observer and light weapon cloche, was the most common type used in Maginot Line fortifications.

Cost: 10pts

Weapons: MMG

JM-CLOCHE

The *Jumelage de Mitrailleuses* cloche was equipped with twin machine guns.

Cost: 20pts

Weapons: two MMGs (must be fired at the same target)

Options:

- May convert to AM, *Armes Mixte,* cloche by adding a light antitank gun for +50pts, but this weapon may not be fired in the same turn as the MMGs

LG-CLOCHE

The *Lance-Grenade* cloche was equipped with a grenade launcher firing through a hole in the roof. Treat this as a VB launcher.

Cost: 20pts

Weapons: VB launcher

Special Rules:

- VB Launcher: This is an attachment to a rifle that fires grenades, turning the weapon into a light mortar. It can operate each turn either as a rifle or a VB launcher. See page 11 of *Armies of France and the Allies.*

TURRETS

Turrets are similar to cloches, but have their own special rules. Turrets...

- Can only be fitted to a blockhouse cell that is buried.
- Can be given a Run order to be lowered or raised.
- Cannot fire, but also cannot be attacked when lowered, when raised they can be attacked as normal, treating it as an immobilised vehicle with armour 10 all round (no Pen modifiers for side/top/rear armour apply).
- When raised, they can be turned through 360 degrees to fire just like a tank turret.
- An immobilisation result on the Armoured Targets Damage Results table prevents the turret from lowering.

MMG TURRET

A small turret equipped with MMGs.

Cost: 30pts
Weapons: Two twin MMGs (must be fired at the same target)

AM TURRET

These have a mixed armament.

Cost: 70pts
Weapons: Two twin MMGs, light anti-tank gun
Options:

- Upgrade the anti-tank gun to medium anti-tank gun for +20pts

Special Rules:

- MMGs can be fired simultaneously at the same target or the antitank gun can be fired.

ARTILLERY TURRET

A variety of artillery turrets were used equipped with 75 mm and 135 mm howitzers.

Cost: 110pts

Weapons: Twin light howitzers

Options:

- May be upgraded to twin medium howitzers for +40pts
- May be upgraded with two twin MMGs for +10pts

Special Rules:

- The howitzers can be fired simultaneously at the same target or the MMGs can be fired.

ARTILLERY EMBRASURES

An embrasure is treated as a bunker (see the rules for bunkers in the *Bolt Action* rulebook) situated over the blockhouse. Embrasures should be fitted with a weapon and crew selected from the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement for the usual cost. Note this does not include anti-aircraft weapons, but does include light, medium or heavy field artillery, medium mortars and light or medium anti-tank guns. Crews should normally be Regular, but the player can use Inexperienced or Veteran crew as he wishes, adjusting the cost appropriately.

A weapon firing from an embrasure covers one of the arcs of the blockhouse that the embrasure is facing, as shown by the model you are using.

The artillery weapon and its crew can be fired on independently of the blockhouse cell, but they benefit from a cover modifier of -3. Infantry can close assault the crew of a weapon inside an embrasure as if they were assaulting a bunker, and by moving into base contact with either the embrasure itself or the blockhouse below it, if it's not buried; it is assumed that they are clambering over the blockhouse to get at the embrasure, rolling grenades, firing weapons through the slit and so on.

Artillery weapons in embrasures cannot be given an Advance or Run order.

PASSIVE PROTECTION – MINES, BARBED WIRE AND DRAGON'S TEETH

The Maginot Line forts were protected by vast amounts of barbed wire, dragon's teeth obstacles, anti-tank ditches and minefields. These linear obstacles are designed to impede or prevent the passage of infantry or vehicles.

For game purposes barbed wire and dragon's teeth are modelled on strips of card 8" long and around 1" wide. When destroyed they are simply removed from the board.

Combat engineers (pioneers etc.) can clear an adjacent dragon's teeth or barbed wire strip by receiving a Down Order (not as a reaction to enemy fire!).

Rules for mines are provided in the New Scenario Rules on here.

DRAGON'S TEETH

On the Maginot Line these took the form of three metre long steel rails buried in concrete with only the top metre showing.

Cost: 10pts per 8” strip

Special Rules:

- During a preparatory bombardment, roll a die for each strip and on a 6 it is destroyed. They can also be destroyed by combat engineers (see below).
- Impassable to vehicles and artillery.

Airpower was to play a major part in operations throughout World War II and German air superiority was a key factor during the Blitzkrieg era, overturning many old fashioned assumptions about mobility and defence. Alexander De Seversky writing in *Victory Through Air Power* (1942) observed, “The Maginot Line, a true marvel of mechanical ingenuity, offered an almost perfect defence against invasion in its old prevarication forms. The fall of that Line was therefore tantamount to the fall of a whole epoch in the history of warmaking.”

BARBED WIRE

Barbed wire is designed to slow down units of troops.

Cost: 10pts per 8” strip

Special Rules:

- During a preparatory bombardment, roll a die for each strip and on a 6 it is destroyed. They can also be destroyed by combat engineers (see below), and by tracked vehicles moving over them, as normal for obstacles.
- A linear obstacle to infantry (see page 27 of the *Bolt Action* rulebook), impassable to wheeled vehicles and artillery units, but destroyed by the passage of tracked and half tracked vehicles.

88mm Flak 36

THEATRE SELECTORS

BRITISH DUNKIRK PERIMETER

Consult the *Armies of Great Britain* supplement for a detailed description of the units.

BEF 2-pdr anti-tank gun

BRITISH DUNKIRK PERIMETER REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second

2 Regular Infantry sections (early war)

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain or Major

0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)

0–1 Medic

Infantry

0–4 Regular Infantry sections (early war)

0–1 MMG team

0–1 Mortar team: light or medium mortar

0–1 Anti-tank rifle team

Artillery
0–2 Guns from:
Light Anti-tank gun: 2pdr or Hotchkiss 25mm
Light Howitzer: 18/25 pdr

SPECIAL RULES

- Baptism of Fire: The British units in the following selector are just as described in the *Armies of Great Britain* book. However, they **must** choose the Rapid Fire national characteristic and **cannot** be purchased as Veterans.

In addition, the following rules **replace** the *Bombardment* and *Artillery Support* army special rules.

- Resolute: British infantry were resolute in defence. If a British infantry or artillery unit that was treated as in cover when the enemy fired at it suffers enough casualties to cause a Morale check, the unit benefits from a +1 Morale modifier for the check.
- Sticky: British infantry and artillery tended to get separated from advancing armour. British infantry and artillery units must always take an Order test when given an advance or run order, even if the unit is not pinned.

FRENCH DLC

DLC stands for *Divisions Légères de Cavalerie* ('Light Cavalry Division'). The French recognised the obsolescence of horsed cavalry on a modern battlefield, but cavalry units were only reorganised into a more modern structure in February 1940 with the creation of five DLC divisions. The Brigade de Spahis – Moroccan and Algerian troops – remained organised as small reconnaissance units of light cavalry.

The subunits of a DLC are as follows: A *Brigade de Cavalerie*, 1,200 horse supported by medium machine guns mounted on horse-drawn carts (see the Tacsanka rules on page 84 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement), horse-towed light anti-tank guns and 60mm light mortars on pack horses; and a *Brigade Légère Mécanique*, which consisted of a *Régiment d'Autos-Mitrailleuses* with a battalion of Hotchkiss H35 light tanks and a battalion of Panhard 178 armoured cars and a *Régiment de Dragons Portés* equipped with various light trucks and Unic Citroën-Kégresse P 19 half-tracks where available.

All units in this selector can be found in the Additional Units section for *Fall Gelb*, starting on here, while the troops are as described in the *Armies of France and the Allies* book.

DLC REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Lieutenant – First or Second (mounted on horseback for +2pts per man)
2 Cavalry sections (in addition, 1 soldier may have a VB launcher for +20pts)

plus:

Headquarters

0–1 Captain or Major (mounted on horseback for +2pts per man)
0–1 Medic
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery)

Infantry/Cavalry

0–4 units from: Cavalry sections (in addition, 1 soldier may have a VB launcher for +20pts), Dragons Portes/Chasseurs Portes infantry sections
0–1 Motorbike section
0–1 Machine gun team mounted on cart
0–1 Mortar team: 60mm light mortar, 81mm medium mortar

Artillery

0–1 Artillery unit from:
Field gun: 75mm 1897 light howitzer, 105mm 1936 medium howitzer
Anti-tank gun: 25mm SA 34 light anti-tank gun, 47mm SA 37 medium anti-tank gun

Armoured Cars and Recce Vehicles

0–1 vehicle from: AMD Panhard 178 armoured car, AMR33 tankette

Tanks and Tank Destroyers

0–1 vehicle from: Hotchkiss H35, Citroën-Kégresse portee

Transports and Tows

The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: light trucks, Lorraine 38, Laffly S20 TL, Laffly S15/V15, Unic P107 half-track, Citroën-Kégresse half-track, horse-drawn limber (see here)

SPECIAL RULES

- The Communication Breakdown, Forward Artillery Doctrine and Hurriedly Conscripted Reserves army special rules are in effect, as described on pages 10–11 of the *Armies of France and the Allies* supplement.

ITALIAN ARIETE 1940

See the *Armies of Italy and the Axis* supplement for details on the units, except for the L3/35 R, which is presented on here of this volume.

ITALIAN ARIETE 1940 REINFORCED PLATOON

1 Command vehicle from: L3/35 R, any L3/35 tankette (any variant), or M11/39 tank, any vehicle may be given the Command Rule for +25pts (*Bolt Action* rulebook page 95)
2 L3/35 tankettes (any variant)

plus:

Headquarters
0–1 Captain or Major
0–1 Medic
0–1 Forward Observer (Artillery or Air)

Infantry
0–3 Bersaglieri infantry squads
0–1 Sniper team
0–1 MMG team
0–1 Anti-tank rifle team
0–1 Mortar team: light or medium
0–1 Flamethrower Team

Artillery

0–1 gun from:

Artillery gun: light or medium

Anti-tank gun: 47/32 Elefantino light anti-tank gun

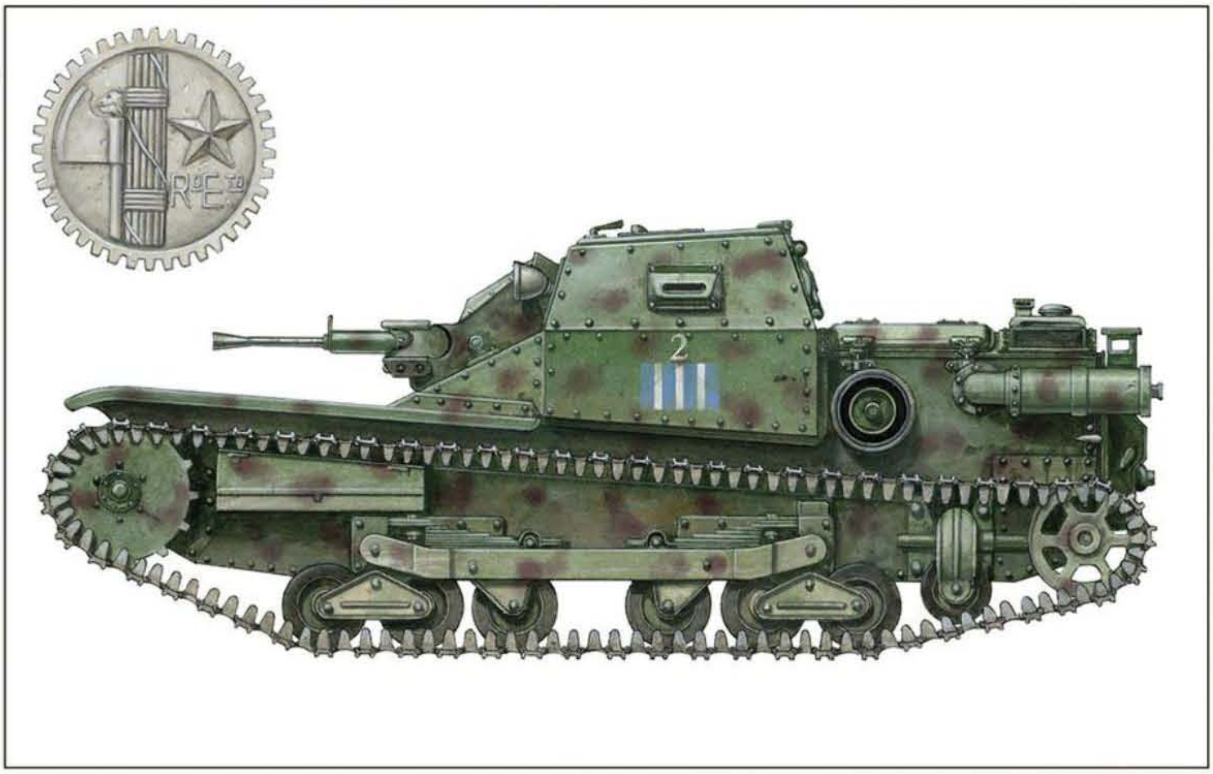
Anti-aircraft gun: Breda 20mm light AA gun, 75/46 heavy AA gun

Tanks and Anti-Aircraft Vehicles

0–2 Vehicles from: L3/35 (any variant), M11/39, AA truck

Transport and Tows

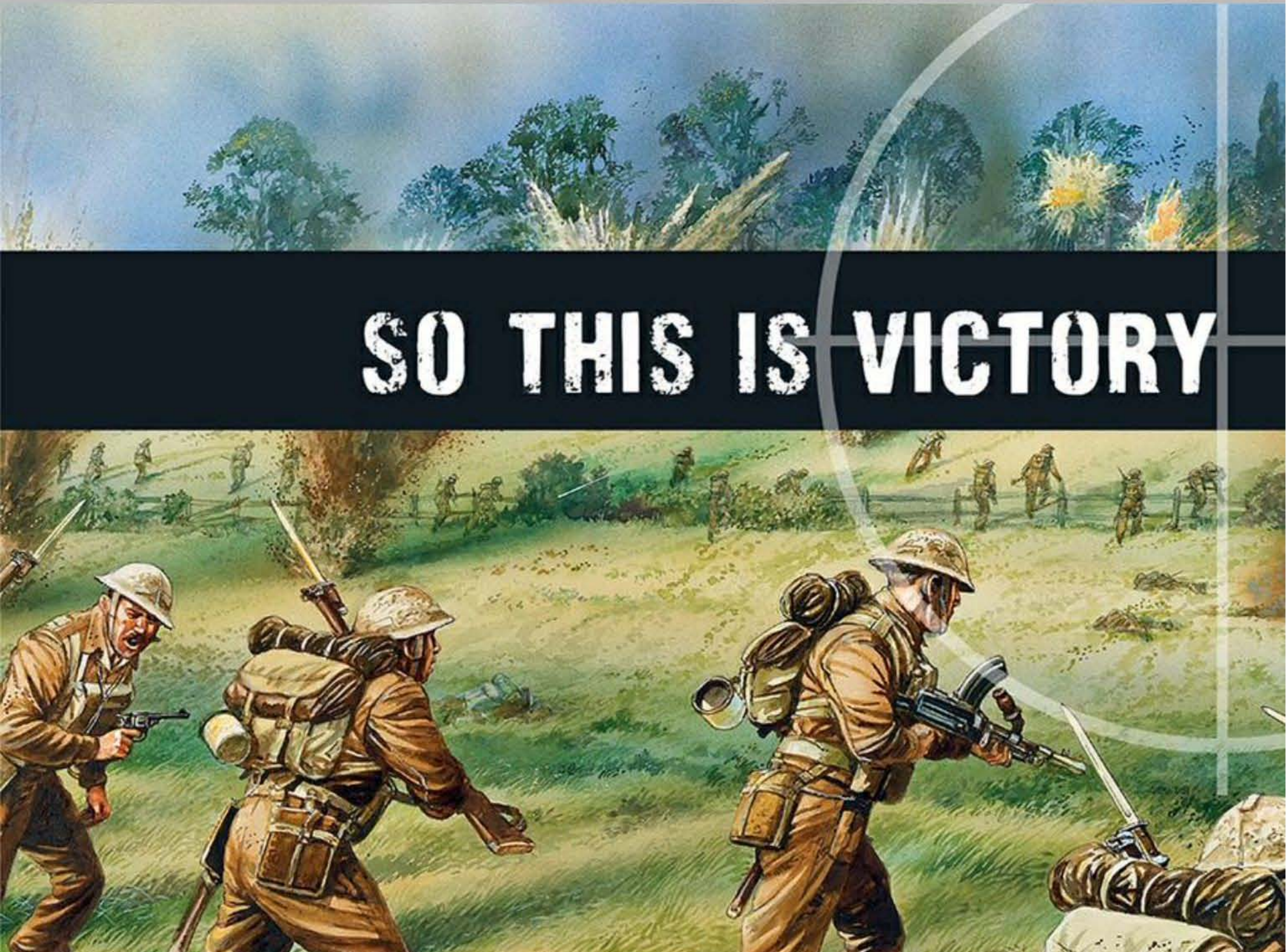
The platoon **must** include enough transport vehicles to transport all infantry and artillery units, from: truck, Fiat 508 CM, wheeled artillery tractor



L 3/35, I Battaglione, 32° Reggimento Carristi, 132 ª Divisione Corazatta Ariete, by Richard Chasemore © Osprey Publishing. Taken from New

Vanguard 191: Italian Light Tanks.

SO THIS IS VICTORY



The 3rd Grenadier Guards' counterattack on the road to Dunkirk, by Peter Dennis © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Campaign 265: Fall Gelb *1940 (2)*.

CONCLUSION

Can nothing stop the inexorable march of Hitler's Panzer Divisions?

"The British have lost the war, but they don't know it; one must give them time, and they will come round." – Adolf Hitler's words to General Alfred Jodl after the fall of France.

With the surrender of France the triumph of German arms was complete. Poland, Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands, Luxemburg, Belgium and France had fallen like dominoes in the space of just ten months. The spate of victories was Napoleonic. But like Napoleon, Hitler now had a problem. His victorious armies had reached salt water and the ocean belonged to the Royal Navy, the largest fleet in the world in 1940.

Across the Channel lurked the unforgiving presence of what 'Beppo' Schmidt, the Luftwaffe's head of intelligence had dubbed "the most dangerous enemy": the British. The folly of German strategic thinking is shown by what happened when the Panzers reached the sea. Hitler, like Philip of Spain, Napoleon, or the Kaiser, stared impotently across the water at an enemy he couldn't reach, but who had the naval power to strangle continental economies.

Germany's Fuhrer seemed initially incapable of grasping that the British were not going to simply fall in with his wishes. Hitler offered what he thought were generous concessions, but the ungrateful islanders ignored him.

Apparently not the faintest glimmer of a thought had occupied anyone's mind in the German high command as to what to do if the British proved intransigent, and intransigence from the British was hardly an unlikely scenario given their history.

Step two was to threaten to invade.

The German army happily concocted plans for a major channel crossing. The Kriegsmarine begged to differ. They at least had a firm and professional grasp of the Royal Navy's likely response to a sizable German force launching itself into the English Channel on wooden river barges. The Third Reich had never possessed much of a surface fleet and now a substantial part of what it once had was lying on the ocean bed off the coast of Norway.

Nevertheless, the Kriegsmarine and the Heer agreed that the first step was the establishment of air superiority over the Channel, thus neatly tossing the problem to the Luftwaffe.

Goering boasted that his Luftwaffe could launch a strategic bombing campaign of such magnitude that it would knock Britain out of the war. So not an invasion, but a triumphant cruise to take possession would be all that was required. The Luftwaffe's failure at Dunkirk under far more favourable circumstances was apparently forgotten.

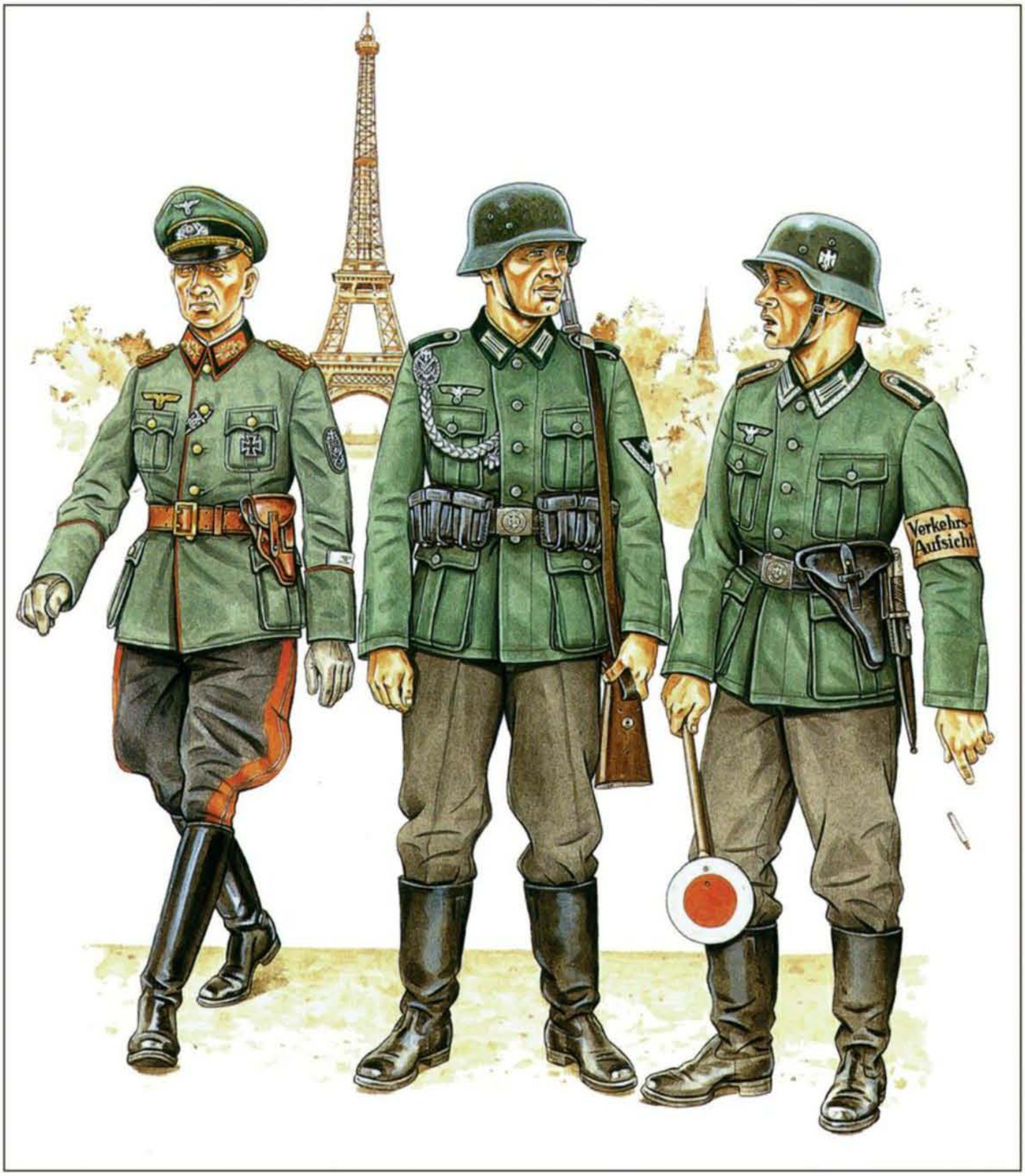
It didn't go too well and Britain won a major strategic victory in the battle of Britain. Indeed, the RAF came out of the battle of Britain stronger than it went in, but the Luftwaffe had been fatally weakened.

When the British couldn't be subdued by arm waving and bullying, Hitler chose to attack the Soviet Union. Halder mentioned in his diaries that such an assault would persuade Britain to sue for peace because their last hope would be destroyed.

Nothing indicates the inability of the Germany military to grasp the fundamentals of global strategy more than this staggeringly ill-conceived belief. Germany, deficient in essential resources, was unable to overcome an opponent in the west who had the capacity to shut down its seaborne supply. The solution: to attack their eastern ally who could and did supply everything Germany needed. This was the view not just of Hitler but also of the Chief of the German General Staff.

So the Panzer generals raced on east until the last litre of fuel had been consumed and their armies froze at the gates of Moscow. The British had slammed the door to the west hard shut in the summer of 1940 and the Soviets did likewise in the east.

Germany was now besieged by hostile powers on both flanks. It only had sufficient internal resources to fight a short war, but its opponents had access to the world. Hitler's declaration of war on the USA simply put the tin lid on Germany's strategic situation. American industrial muscle would turn what would have been a ten year war of slow strangulation into a knockout blow within a mere four.



The Army of Occupation (L–R): Generalmajor, 215. Infanteriedivision; Obergefreiter, Oberfeldkommandantur 672; Unteroffizier, Verkehrsregelungsbataillon 754, by Stephen Andrew © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Men-at-Arms 311: The German Army 1939–45 (1).

COULD GERMANY HAVE WON WORLD WAR II?

One of the most popular 'What ifs' of alternate history is whether the

Nazis could have won World War II if they had just boxed a little bit smarter or merely been a little bit luckier. Generally these scenarios require the ragtag leadership of the Third Reich to show supernatural prescience and their opponents to be half-witted.

A glance at the combined resources available to Germany, Japan and Italy, compared with the British Empire, France, Soviet Union and the United States, dispels immediately any idea that the Axis could beat the Allies in a drawn out fight to the finish. They had as must chance as Carthage against Rome or the Confederacy against the Union: none at all.

But perhaps the Third Reich could have won World War II simply by changing the rules, by refusing to fight an unwinnable global war. The Prussian/German military was designed for short border wars and was tactically and operationally incomparable.

I suggest that the key moment was at the end of *Fall Gelb*. Poland had been destroyed, and Denmark, Norway and The Low Countries occupied. The Soviet Union was a faithful ally, the USA was neutral and likely to remain so, Britain bounced off the continent and France knocked out of the war.

That was the moment that a clever strategist would have offered an armistice and proposed a withdrawal of all forces in the west to 1939 or even 1914 boundaries. France would have jumped at it. British politicians would have been under enormous pressure to end an unpopular war. Indeed, Germany's withdrawal from the occupied west could have been presented to the British public as an honourable draw.

Poland? Well Poland could have been quietly forgotten just as it was in 1945.

Hitler had always claimed that he had never wanted a two-front war, or indeed a war in the west at all, so would hardly lose face by being magnanimous. Then he would have been free to attack the Soviet Union at his leisure unencumbered by blockade in the Atlantic and war in the

Mediterranean. After all, Communist Russia was no ally of France or Britain.

But of course, Hitler was no sort of strategist at all. One may reasonably doubt if he was entirely sane. He just could not resist humiliating France in revenge for Germany's defeat in World War I by pursuing *Fall Rot*. That set the dominoes falling in a pattern that only ended in Berlin.

Smoke! A moment's respite…

NEW SCENARIO RULES

Armoured train at Mokra, by Howard Gerrard © Osprey Publishing. Taken from Campaign 107: *Poland 1939*.

ARMOURED TRAINS

World War II saw the last hurrah for a number of weapon systems first devised in the nineteenth century. One such was the big-gun battleship and another was the armoured train.

The first employment of armoured trains seems to have been as an anti-guerrilla vehicle by the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1848. The first major use of these vehicles was in the American Civil War, again often for security work. They patrolled the rail lines, which were so important for supply. Heavy armoured gun wagons for use in battle seem to have been first built by General Lee for the Confederate Army. They were copied by the Union Army and various European powers. Gun-wagons took part in the siege of Paris during the Franco-Prussian War.

The Royal Navy and Royal Engineers spearheaded further development of this weapon. British armoured trains fought in the Sudan and South Africa. Winston Churchill was famously captured in a Boer commando ambush of a British armoured train. In World War I conditions on the Western Front were unsuitable for battle-trains, but the same was not true of the large sparsely populated regions of the East. Imperial Russia placed great emphasis on armoured vehicles and had great success with their armoured trains, causing Austro-Hungary and Germany to build their own.

The high noon of the armoured train was the Russian Civil War. Russia had few roads in the early twentieth century, as the Panzerwaffe was to discover in 1941, so railways assumed a vital importance. Most civil war battles occurred within a few kilometres of a major railway line.

In the Blitzkrieg era, Germany and Poland still had armoured trains in service. Germany tried unsuccessfully to use two armoured trains to capture key railway bridges on the first day of World War II. More German armoured train operations took place in the invasion of the Netherlands, in general also unsuccessfully. Poland had ten armoured trains in service on the outbreak of war. All had been modernised in the 1930s.

There was a second class of combat rail vehicle: the armoured and armed rail-wagon. These were single, self-propelled armoured vehicles usually armed with machine guns, used to patrol railway lines. There was a wide variety of types, but they can be divided into three: armoured motorised railway wagons, armoured cars whose road wheels were replaced with railway-compatible wheels, and tracked vehicles modified to drive a rail flat-car.

Tanks were sometimes referred to as landships in the early days, but the name more appropriately applied to armoured trains. Trains, like battleships, were horribly vulnerable to strike planes.

ARMOURED TRAIN RULES

MOVEMENT

For the purposes of movement we need to define a new type of unit: train.

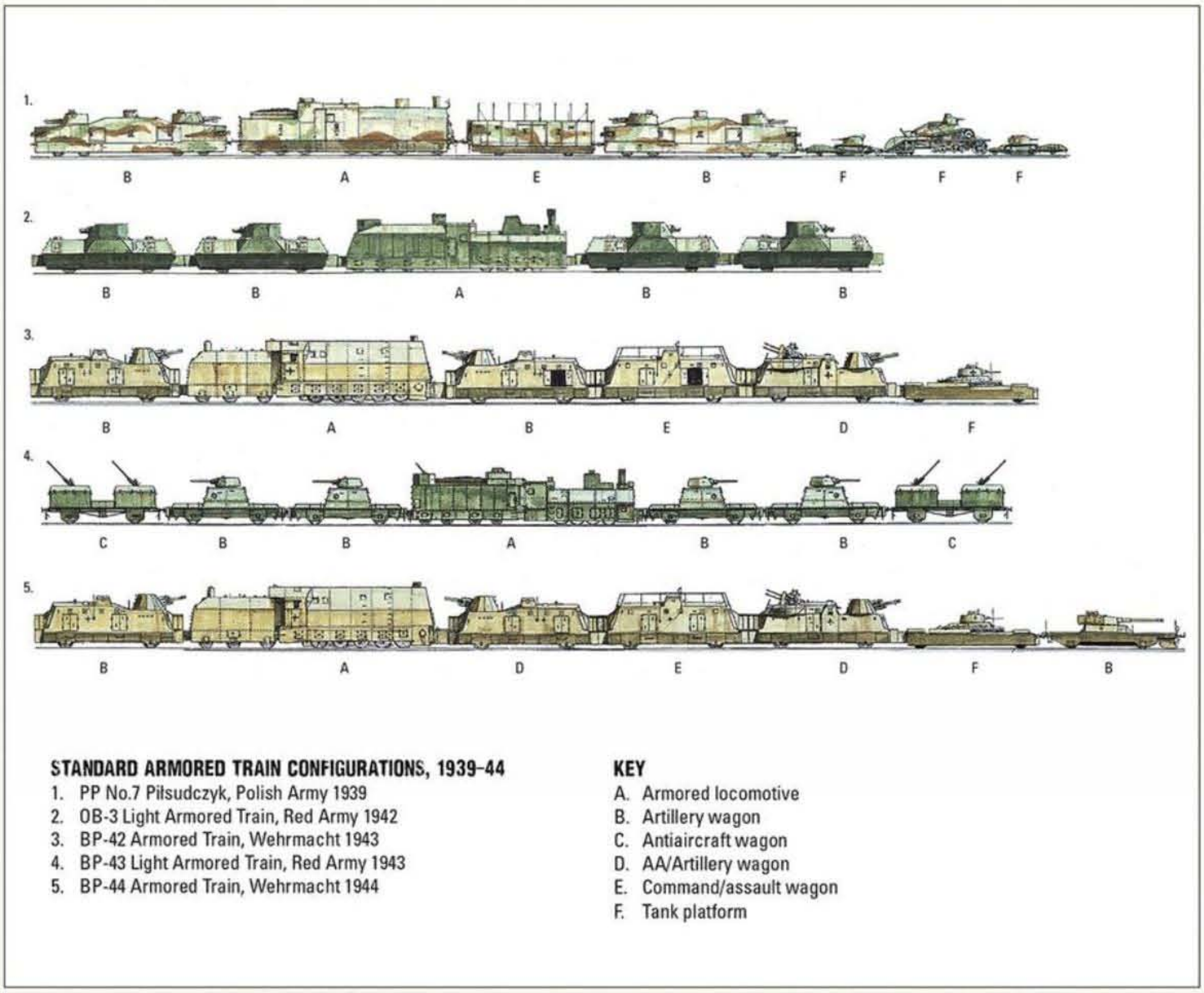
Trains consist of a number of 'wagons' that are attached to each other at the beginning of the game and will remain so throughout.

Trains may only move along undamaged rail lines. Any railway wagon moving onto a broken line is considered to be destroyed.

Trains move at the same speed as wheeled vehicles, but there is no reverse: each direction is 'forward'.

Wagons with the Unpowered special rule cannot move, unless they are part of a train that includes at least one functional powered wagon (locomotive, etc.).

Train movement is complex, so the above rule is a simplification. Steam trains can move rather fast but would not do so in a combat zone for fear of derailment if the front wagon hit a mine or section of damaged track. Heavy gun wagons would normally be stationary while firing.



STANDARD ARMORED TRAIN CONFIGURATIONS, 1939–44

1. PP No.7 Piłsudczyk, Polish Army 1939
2. OB-3 Light Armored Train, Red Army 1942
3. BP-42 Armored Train, Wehrmacht 1943
4. BP-43 Light Armored Train, Red Army 1943
5. BP-44 Armored Train, Wehrmacht 1944

KEY

A. Armored locomotive
B. Artillery wagon
C. Antiaircraft wagon
D. AA/Artillery wagon
E. Command/assault wagon
F. Tank platform

WAGONS

Armoured trains consisted of a number of wagons hitched together, the possible wagons are listed here below.

ARMOURED ENGINE

An armoured steam locomotive that would normally be unarmed.

Cost: 15pts (Regular)
Weapons: None
Damage Value: 6+
Tow: May tow or push other rail wagons

Options:

- May increase armour to 7+ at a cost of 35pts
- May increase armour from 7+ to 8+ at a further cost of 20pts

Special Rules:

- Armoured all around: flank and rear Pen modifiers do not apply, however hits against the top armour do benefit from the normal +1 Pen modifier

FLAT-CAR

A wagon used to transport equipment and more rarely troops or even other vehicles. It could also be pushed, unoccupied, in front of the train to set off mines.

Cost: 10pts (Regular)

Weapons: None

Damage Value: 6+

Transport: Up to 12 men or one armoured car (see below)

Special Rules:

- Unpowered

IMPROVISED ARMOURED WAGON

Civilian railway wagons reinforced with sandbags or something similar.

Cost: 40pts (Regular)

Weapons: None

Damage Value: 7+

Transport: Up to 12 men

Options:

- May add up to two pintle-mounted medium machine guns (one covering the left arc, one covering the right arc) for +15pts each

- May have top armour (removing the Open Topped rule) for +10pts

Special Rules:

- Open Topped
- There will be loopholes or similar for the passengers to fire out using their personal weapons. Half may fire to each side, measuring range and LOS from the middle of the flank or any visible openings in the model used.
- Armoured all around: flank and rear Pen modifiers do not apply, however hits against the top armour do benefit from the normal +1 Pen modifier.
- Inadequate armour: Improvised armour made from poor quality steel, concrete or other esoteric materials added to civilian vehicles. Add +1 to die roll when rolling for damage results on the vehicle damage table.
- Unpowered

COMMAND/ASSAULT WAGON

Lightly armoured wagons used as transport and command vehicles.

Cost: 50pts (Regular)

Weapons: None

Damage Value: 7+

Transport: Up to 12 men

Options:

- May add up to two pintle-mounted medium machine guns (one covering the left arc, one covering the right arc) for +15pts each

Special Rules:

- Armoured all around: flank and rear Pen modifiers do not apply, however hits against the top armour do benefit from the normal +1 Pen modifier.

- Command Vehicle.
- Unpowered.

POLISH GUN WAGON

The standard Polish artillery wagon had two artillery pieces in turrets located at each end and various machine gun mounts.

Cost: 255pts (Regular)

Weapons: Two light howitzers in turrets (all round fire), eight MMGs (four per side), one pintle-mounted HMG in AA mounting (all round fire)

Damage Value: 7+

Options:

- May exchange the light howitzers for medium howitzers at a cost of +40pts

Special Rules:

- Armoured all around: flank and rear Pen modifiers do not apply, however hits against the top armour do benefit from the normal +1 Pen modifier
- Unpowered

GERMAN GUN WAGON

German artillery wagons of the Blitzkrieg era were more primitive than their Polish equivalents. They had a 37mm light anti-tank gun in a lower turret and a 75mm light howitzer in an upper turret. Later German armoured trains were more impressive with better armour, heavier weapons and multiple automatic cannon in AA mounts.

Cost: 110pts (Regular)

Weapons: One light howitzer in a turret (all round fire), one light anti-tank gun in a turret (covering left, right and front arc), two MMGs (one per side).

Damage Value: 7+

Options:

- May exchange the light howitzer and/or light anti-tank gun for medium howitzers or medium anti-tank guns at a cost of +20pts each
- May add up to three MMGs per side at a cost of +10pts each
- May reinforce the armour, cancelling the Inadequate armour rule, for +10pts
- May add one light automatic cannon in an AA mount (all round fire) for +35pts, which can then be upgraded to a heavy automatic cannon for an additional +10pts, or to four light automatic cannons in a quad mount for an additional +90pts

Special Rules:

- Armoured all around: flank and rear Pen modifiers do not apply, however hits against the top armour do benefit from the normal +1 Pen modifier.
- Inadequate armour: Improvised armour made from poor quality steel, concrete or other esoteric materials added to civilian vehicles. Add +1 to die roll when rolling for damage results on the vehicle damage table.
- Unpowered.

SELF-PROPELLED ARMOURED RAIL WAGONS

These have internal engines or carry a vehicle that powers them. They can also be coupled to an armoured train.

TATRA T18

A motorised armoured wagon designed in Czechoslovakia in 1938 for the Polish army. Six were made.

Cost: 40pts (Inexperienced), 50pts (Regular), 60pts (Veteran)

Weapons: 2 MMGs in a turret (all round fire)
Damage Value: 7+ (armoured car)

POLISH TKS TANKETTE RAILWAY CARRIAGE

The Tatra was less than entirely successful so the Polish army came up with an armoured fighting vehicle carrier. A tankette was mounted on a flat-car designed to be driven by the vehicle's tracks. The vehicle could be disengaged from the mechanism and detrained to operate independently. The carriage could be connected to an armoured train.

Cost: 60pts (Inexperienced), 75pts (Regular), 90pts (Veteran)
Weapons: 1 hull-mounted MMG
Damage Value: 7+ (tankette)
Options:

- Upgrade the hull-mounted MMG to a light automatic cannon for +20pts

Special Rules:

- Detrain: The tankette starts the game on a flat-car (see above), but may detrain. It may be driven off the flat-car upon successful receipt of a Run order provided the flat car remains stationary for the duration of the turn. Take the tank or tankette off the flat car and place it immediately adjacent to the end of the car. This completes its Run move. The flat car may only move under its own power while the vehicle is aboard. Once off, the vehicle may not reboard the flat car during the course of the game.
- Recce (after detraining).

POLISH LIGHT TANK RAILWAY CARRIAGE

A similar vehicle to the tankette railway carriage, but designed to carry the Renault FT light tank. This works exactly the same as the TKS railway carriage described above, except that the vehicle on the special flat-car is a

Renault FT light tank (see page 21 of the *France and the Allies* book).

Cost: 32pts (Inexperienced), 40pts (Regular), 48pts (Veteran)

MINEFIELDS

MINEFIELD RULES

Players can decide to add minefields to any of their games, as long as they agree beforehand. Usually the defender in a scenario can deploy mines, since attackers are pushing into a new area and have not had the opportunity.

Initially, we are going to provide rules for visible, marked minefields, as we assume that both sides are adhering to the Geneva Convention and marking their minefields. We shall also deal by default with anti-personnel mines, as they are the most common. Later on we'll also provide rules for anti-tank, mixed, dummy and concealed minefields.

MINEFIELD SECTIONS

The default minefield section in *Bolt Action* is a 6"-sided square area. Larger minefields can be made by placing several of these sections next to each other.

Normally, we tend to allow the defender in a scenario two minefield sections per full 1000 points of his force. Or if you prefer you can allow a certain amount of points to be spent on minefields (up to 10 per cent of the force total), and say that each section costs 50pts.

A minefield section can either be a cardboard base appropriately decorated, much like an area of rough ground, or can be delimited ad hoc before a game using four 6” long obstacles (like a 6” length of barbed wire), or even simply using four counters set up at 6” distance to mark the corners of the minefield.

EFFECT OF MINEFIELDS

When any unit (friend or foe) moves into a minefield section, the opponent can interrupt their movement once at any point during their move, just as if the minefield itself was in Ambush. When the opponent declares that the minefield is ‘attacking’ the unit, the controlling player must halt at that point and note how much movement the unit has left. Assuming the unit survives its encounter with the minefield, it will finish its move as normal.

After the unit has been positioned at its ‘Ambush’ point, the opponent rolls one die to see if the unit triggers a mine, effectively rolling to hit the unit with the minefield section itself. A minefield section needs a 3+ to hit an Inexperienced unit, 4+ for a Regular unit, and 5+ for a Veteran unit.

Units belonging to the player that has placed the minefield are supposed to know the location of the mines, so they can force the opponent to re-roll any successful hit, as long as they are moving at an Advance. Also, units of combat engineers (Engineers, Pioneers, etc.) are trained to deal with these obstacles and always benefit from this re-roll when moving at an Advance, even when crossing the enemy’s minefields.

If any unit (including friends and engineers) is sufficiently foolhardy to cross a minefield at a Run, the minefield rolls three dice when ambushing the unit rather than one!

If the minefield misses with all of its dice, the unit has not triggered a mine and can finish its move normally. If the minefield scores hits, then each successful hit is resolved with a Penetration value of +2 against non-armoured targets and +3 against armoured targets (Damage roll of 7+). Roll to damage as normal. A unit that is hit also suffers D3 pin markers rather than just 1. Note that the higher value Pen against armoured targets reflects the fact that the anti-personnel mine hits the weakly armoured belly of the vehicle – not normally considered from the point of view of other hits.

If the unit is not destroyed, or broken by a resulting Morale check, it can finish its move as normal.

Note that a single minefield section can attack a unit only once per move, but can attack any number of units moving over it during the turn. Also, if a unit was foolish enough to cross two (or more!) minefield sections as part of the same move, each section can ambush it in turn.

ANTI-TANK MINEFIELDS

At the beginning of the game, you may secretly write down that any of your minefields is an anti-tank minefield. Anti-tank minefields only affect vehicles, and are ignored by infantry and artillery units that move over them. However, hits inflicted on vehicles are at +5 Pen rather than the normal +2.

MIXED MINEFIELDS

You can also create a mixed minefield section by ‘using up’ two of your sections. So, if for example you were allowed two sections in the scenario being played, you can lay both out as anti-tank or anti-personnel minefields, or deploy a single one as a mixed minefield. Make a note of which section is mixed.

A mixed minefield section combines the best of both worlds and will affect infantry and artillery with +2 Pen hits, but vehicles with +5 Pen hits.

DUMMY MINEFIELDS

You can replace any real minefield section allowed by the scenario with two dummy minefield sections. For example, if you are allowed two sections, you can place three down. Make a note of which sections are dummies. Your opponent might notice this variation in the number of allowed minefields, in which case he'll know some minefields are dummies, but of course he won't know which ones!

When units enter a dummy minefield, roll to ambush them as normal (including any re-rolls that the opponent may force upon you). If you score a hit, however, you have to reveal the minefield is just a dummy, and from now on it counts as a cleared minefield section (see below), as a few mines were often left even in dummy minefields.

MINEFIELDS IN WATER

As mines in shallow and deep water are intended solely to destroy boats and amphibious vehicles, you cannot place anti-personnel minefields in water terrain (Shallow or Deep), but you can place anti-tank minefields, or dummy ones, in either type of water terrain (see rules for movement in water on page 31 of *Battleground Europe*).

CONCEALED MINEFIELDS

Instead of visibly deploying your minefields sections, you may halve the number of sections available and deploy them hidden without any markings. We cannot condone and do not encourage the use of this despicable practice, which is against the Geneva Convention!

Make an accurate note of where the minefield sections are. You can either use coordinates and/or make a map of the table as you wish. You cannot place hidden minefields in the enemy's set-up zone.

During the game, when a unit moves into the minefield, you must reveal it (the unit has spotted that something is amiss) and place it on the table, and then proceed to ambush the unit as normal.

CLEARING MINEFIELDS

Once a minefield section has scored one or more hits on a unit passing over it, the opposing player rolls a die. On the roll of a 6, the minefield is ***cleared***. If the unit that was hit was a vehicle with damage value 8 or more, the minefield is instead cleared on a 4+. This represents any subsequent troops either following in the tracks of the first or moving over craters left by previous exploded mines.

A cleared minefield is left in place, but from that point onwards the minefield only ever scores hits on a 6, regardless of the quality of the troops crossing it, and always rolls a single die 'to hit', even against units moving at a Run. Re-rolls for friends and Engineers still apply. This represents hurried mines clearance under fire, which is not exactly a thorough process, and might definitely leave a few isolated mines behind.

Thankfully, there are alternative means of clearing a minefield other than walking your infantry or driving your tanks over it. These are listed below with their rules.

MANUAL MINE CLEARANCE BY INFANTRY

Any infantry unit that has at least five models inside a minefield can be ordered to attempt to clear it using their bayonets. The unit must be given a special 'Mine clearing' order, which is the same as giving the unit a Down order – place a Down marker next to the unit and then make a 'mine clearing roll' applying all of the modifiers below. In order to clear the minefield section, the result needs to be a 6 after modifications. Note that a natural 6 is always a success and a natural 1 is always a failure. In addition, if a natural 1 is rolled, the minefield section ambushes the unit as normal (and in this case, an anti-tank minefield **does** affect the tampering infantry!).

MINE CLEARING MODIFIERS (CUMULATIVE)

- Veterans +1
- Inexperienced -1
- Engineers +1
- Mine-clearing gear* +2
- Per pin marker on unit -1

*Any Engineer unit may be equipped before the game with mine clearing gear (Bangalore Torpedoes, mine detectors, etc.) at a cost of +1pt per model, at least one of the models should show this upgrade.

BLOWING IT UP!

Any weapon capable of Indirect Fire can target a visible minefield section. Aim for the centre point of the section and roll to hit as normal (including ranging in for successive shots). If a hit is scored, roll for the HE value of the weapon – if you score at least 6 hits on the minefield with a single shot, the minefield section is cleared.

When resolving an artillery barrage 'Fire for effect' result, roll a die for each minefield section within range of the barrage (including concealed ones!). If you roll a 6, the minefield section is hit by a heavy howitzer as normal, and if you score at least 6 hits on it, it is cleared.

When firing a preparatory bombardment, roll a die for each minefield sections in the defender's set-up zone (including concealed ones!). If you roll a 6 that minefield section is cleared.

German Heer SiG33 150mm howitzer

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